

EVERYDAY RELIGION

A Book of Applied Christianity

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BY

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W. A. WILDE COMPANY

BOSTON :: MASSACHUSETTS

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EVERYDAY RELIGION

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FOREWORD

FOR YEARS it has been my habit to note down from time to time subjects of ordinary relation to Christian life, and fill in odd moments in writing briefly upon them. Some of these have been published. From the accumulation of these, the following selections have been chosen.

The inspiration and blessing of life after all relate more to the little things than to larger events. If the vision is gained amidst the commonplace experiences of life, and even sometimes in her by-paths, or as a result of her accidents, we may profit by them.

Some years ago in a trip up the Regi from Luzerne, our party was disappointed in the cloud that hung over the summit. Suddenly a slight breeze sprung up and took my hat to the edge of a cliff. In reaching for my hat, from where I stood, the breeze had made a rift in the cloud. A vista suddenly opened which revealed the whole magnificent expanse of the Bernice Oberland, but in a moment the breeze had died down; the vista was closed, and we were enwrapped again in the cloud.

If these brief sketches can open up vistas of vision and beauty for others, and can add to their pleasure and help, or make lives more like the life of Him whom we love and serve, their publishing will not be in vain.

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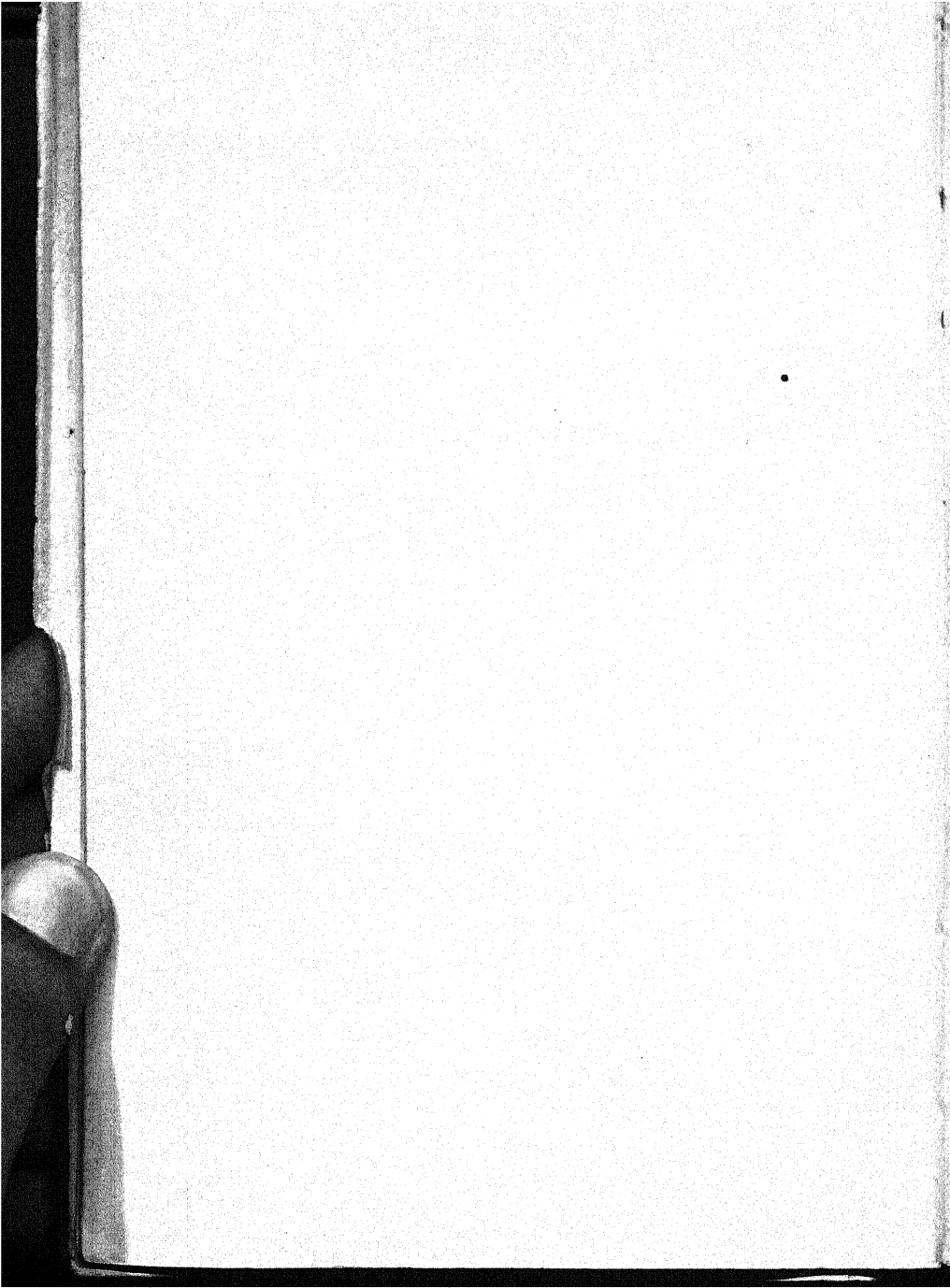
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WORN DOORSTEPS

A YEAR or two ago our eldership was depleted and saddened by the death of an aged physician; one who for many decades has ministered to the physical needs of countless patients. During the later years of his life death and sorrow had entered his home, and his enfeebled body and sympathetic spirit prompted me to enter his home frequently. I never went up his front steps without noting their condition. The red sandstone was so worn away in the deep groove near the rail that one had to step cautiously, especially in slippery weather.

The way of approach to his skill and help was deep-worn. His office and home had been sought constantly throughout the years by those in illness and need. A very modest sign might be seen, but even that was not needed. Those who were sick knew where to find their physician. He was one of the greatest doctors of the city and of the land.

His reputation was local rather than national, but every one who knew him trusted and loved him. No one was ever turned from his door. The need of another in trouble was always his call to service.

Always calm, quiet, cheerful, encouraging, he sent away with the spirit of hopefulness those who came to him.

As the years lengthened, others helped wear down those steps, for friendship had built up its own clientele of devotion and neighborliness.

Once a stranger, a woman, pressed the bell and asked for the doctor. When he came in she quickly greeted him with the remark, "You don't know me, sir, nor do I know you or anything about you, but I saw your steps and I know you can help my sick child."

The thought and memory of this loving friend and man of quiet life come back to me often as time puts into the distance the actual sight of his kindly face and sound of his cheery voice.

And when I recall my friend I ask myself the question, "Are the steps into my home and heart worn by the weary, suffering feet of those in sorrow and in need?"

When an undergraduate at Amherst over thirty

years ago I heard Dr. Richard Storrs of the Church of the Pilgrims, Brooklyn, tell in a lecture to students of a little child—poor, ill and dying. She lived in a cellar on Manhattan. One day when he was passing that cellar door a man came running out and, noting that he was a minister, urged him to go down to see the dying child.

He learned of her drunken father, and the death of her mother; that she had cooked and swept crossings and sold papers to keep the little family of three younger children together.

With pitiful weeping she told him she had gone to Sunday school but once, but had learned of a Man named Jesus who had made a home for her mother and would take her to his home too when she died.

"But how will he know me?" she cried. "He has never seen me!"

Dr. Storrs replied, as he looked at her little, emaciated, bruised and scarred hands, "Show him your little hands, and he'll know you!"

Worn steps mean heart response. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities, by his stripes we are healed."



"TONGUES IN TREES"

A MAN who does not love trees, and to whom they do not speak, should move into the forest until the simplicity of a Walden calms his soul and numbs the sounds of a rushing world into the composure which may be gained in solitude. When Shakespeare gave to the ages "As You Like It" he penned a motto which may well adorn the den of every thoughtful man—

"And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in running brooks,
Sermons in stones and good in everything."

Recently I stood in the great California Park of the immense redwoods in the Big Basin, near San Francisco. There the "sequoia sempervirens" surrounded us. These trees over 300 feet in height, many of them exceeding twenty feet in diameter, give the forest a majesty scarcely short of divine. Men and automobiles at the base of them seemed like mere toys, or as fairies amid the giants of a universe. These trees lived and flourished, we are told, before Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees. We not only found "tongues in trees" but whole sermons seemed to fill the soul

with the awe of eternal growth and the mysterious power of vast silences.

The "tongues" of those gigantic growths of nature, the oldest and largest living things upon earth, give one a new sense of reverence for old mother earth and call into being thoughts that only sentences supreme in diction could express.

The ages seemed to speak to us. Babylonia and Egypt were not ancient empires, known only through the deciphering of mysterious hieroglyphics, but human children again playing at the base of these solemn survivals of the early days of civilization. The ancient prophets of Israel were young again. The iron power of Rome and the personality of the Caesars lived in active romance. These many monarchs of the forest looked down upon a present manger of Bethlehem and heard the lowing of the patient kine mingled with the cry of the Christ Child. The ancient Constantine lived once more; the dark ages which hastened on the coming of a reformation spoke amid the quiet swaying of the upper foliage. The age of chivalry seemed lighted up amid the vistas of the forest—the sunrise scintillated and sparkled on coats of mail; grim castles rising from the

earth. The court of Spain heard the plea of Columbus once again; Pilgrim fathers stood upon the shores of a new world; the thirteen colonies began to speak in terms of representative government and nature's great vaults reëchoed with the sound of musketry in the heroic adventures of a revolutionary struggle. Great statesmen spoke and felt and thought and swayed the hearts of men; Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, Patrick Henry—on down to civil strife in the recent days; a nation's struggle for union. And in cold fact, Fremont himself with his staff and officers sheltered themselves beneath the hollow of one of these very trees, not many miles distant from where we stood.

As from our reverie we aroused to look again through those great vaulted arches other men, women and children of the present day seemed to be hearing the whispers of the trees and listening for a mightier Voice back of their utterances.

Yes, tongues and trees were never so audible as in those mighty forests that so wonderfully preserve and reproduce themselves—for as the giant mother trees decay and fall away a younger

generation erects its stately spires growing from her surrounding base. About them the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the trees in this sublime forest make the present redwoods the glory of the mountains which border the vast Pacific.

IS LIFE WORTH WHILE?

RECENTLY one of our large daily papers quoted a noted attorney who had just debated in the negative the subject: "Is the human race worth working for?" "You can make nothing else of man but man," declared this speaker. "Selfish, mean, oppressive, tyrannical, prejudiced—that is what man is and a lot more. It is absolutely hopeless to change man. I do not care how much environment you give him, heredity and not environment shapes the human race. There is neither purpose in existence nor a goal in living. If we knew where we were going we could pick out the road, but so far as science, philosophy or history can throw any light on the subject, we are not going anywhere and there is no goal and no purpose."

What a sad and deplorable utterance this is! The speaker of these words was certainly consistent, if nothing more. Why, indeed, should he want to live if he holds such a faithless and atheistic view of life and of the future? It reminds us of those words of Scripture: "God is not in all their thoughts."

Compare such words with those of the Apostle Paul: "For me to live is Christ." "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." "The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds always in Christ Jesus."

The poor wretched philosophy of the one sinks into insignificance and loses itself in a groan, while the exultant note of the other clears the night into a whole landscape of hope and happiness in life. Life is worth living with joy and purpose to the man whose life is not self-centered and to him who looks to the eternal God for strength and help.

This old world may be a desert, parched, sand-blown and inhabited with the wild beasts and creeping things of life; or it may be a flower garden reaching out into vast fields of plenty, lit up with the glorious sunrise, the warmth of the

midday sun and the glory and beauty of the sunset.

Life is what a man's soul makes it, not what it makes a man's soul. The statement that it is absolutely hopeless to change man comes from the perverted mind of the atheist and infidel. It is the cry of wretchedness which we read in Romans: "Who shall deliver me from the body of death?" without continuing in the glorious words: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." It expresses the hopeless agony of the destitute, sinful, self-filled soul, and has no thought or knowledge of a Redeemer.

"Jesus Christ came that we might have life and might have it more abundantly." "He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him." He does change human life, but he changes it by rebirth. "Ye must be born again." Writhing in sinful agony and hopeless confusion of mind and body, the demoniac rises to follow the Christ and walks with the people of God in calmness of soul and newness of life. The unclean leper sees his flesh come again "like unto the flesh of a little child"; the lame walk; the blind see; the deaf hear; the dead rise, in the worth-

while life which results from Christ and his power and presence.

There has never been a time when the whole world has longed to know and understand the Christ as it does today. Such utterances as the one we first quoted come from souls which have lost themselves in the wretchedness of personal desire and the egotism of self-help, unconscious of divine values. They reveal the bitterness of a soul which has been stung by the poison of sin and writhes all unconsciously under the influence of the venom of the evil one himself. They are without God and without hope in the world; they do not represent forces that encourage, sweeten, strengthen or win life. They are the dying elements of society. Ofttimes their brilliant speech is but the soul's death-knell. Weak souls are influenced by them and sometimes selfish intellects are unconsciously dragged down into their mire.

COURTESY IN BUSINESS

THE LIFE that does not stand the test of everyday business affairs has little influence in any community. The regular matter-of-fact

humdrum of business detail causes dullness and depression unless there are side issues of friendship and diversion in employment, recreation, sociability or home life. The man who is worried, careworn, peevish, unaccommodating and self-centered in business seldom smiles, and is ever on the defensive and critical. He does not rise above himself or see beyond his office desk. He may be honest, faithful and hardworking and his diligence and thrift may combine to make him trustworthy, but they may rob him of that human good nature without which he is not livable or lovable.

The art of Christian courtesy is worth much to institution and individual, and without it few men can ever advance in position or influence.

The rigid laws of finance and business are not made to bind men, but to protect the public, and wrought iron is worth more than cast iron in human affairs.

Firmness does not eliminate flexibility. The two must be related and combined in well-regulated lives and organizations.

The courteous salesman sells goods where the careless fails. The courteous clerk gains favor

for his firm. Respectful attention and kindness make friends where an indifferent and surly manner injures the man, the business and sometimes the repute of a town.

An instance comes to mind of a through express train delayed several hours in a small western city by a wrecked freight just ahead. A gentleman and his wife and child were spending the time with fellow passengers in the shops and on the streets. Desiring to make a purchase or two, the gentleman entered a local bank and courteously stating his case requested the cashing of a small check which bore his printed name upon the margin. He gave also sufficient identification evidence in papers in his possession. He was promptly and rigidly refused.

Returning later, identified by the official Pullman conductor who knew him, he was not only refused again, but the manner of the bank official and clerks was that of contempt.

Compare such attention to that of another experience where, under somewhat similar circumstances, a self-possessed, genial cashier consulted the president, who, after a moment's conversation,

cordially cashed a check, expressing appreciation that he could confer the favor.

Business never succeeds under such lack of judgment and brusque incivility as shown in the first instance. The larger establishments do not want such men. Petty persons with their smallness and lack of ordinary business courtesy may enjoy their own high esteem but cannot hold the good will of their fellow men.

Christian courtesy is an evidence of the gentleman in life's affairs. Without him, in no true sense can society make progress or business prosper.

THE HONOR OF SERVICE

IN IRVIN COBB'S "Roughing It de Luxe" he commends the person who serves you for hire in the west. He says, "He is neither your menial, nor your superior; he gives you the best he has in stock, meanwhile retaining his own self-respect and expecting you to do the same. He ennobles and dignifies personal service." This is a fine and just tribute and suggests an interesting theme. There is nothing more honorable than the work of serving others. The fake notion that one must

serve only himself and thus show his worth and independence is as foolish as it is ignorant and ego-tistical.

The health of wholesome society; the strength of the state and nation; the character of the home depend upon faithful and unselfish service.

Christianity itself was introduced and developed upon this basis. The Master himself not only washed the disciples' feet but declared himself as one among them that served.

He who is above serving others with fidelity and cheerfulness is not worthy of recognition.

This question of service is a very live one in our day. It cannot be shunned nor ridiculed with propriety. It touches the entire problem of life—the home, the school, the church, as well as labor and capital.

We mentioned some time ago an incident which we think will bear repetition in this connection. Several years ago in one of the fine old castles of Scotland we met a plain painstaking housekeeper from our own country. She had been in charge of the domestic organization there for a score of years.

Seated by invitation in her clean, roomy kitchen, we conversed upon the tendencies of modern life. She remarked, "Why do not more of the American girls engage in housekeeping labor? Why is it considered more honorable to sell ribbon or work in an office than to work in the kitchen or sweep a room?" She added, "I consider my work as honorable and worthy as any woman's work in Great Britain, and I have been happy in it all my life."

At the graduation exercises of one of our largest and best boys' schools this summer, I asked one of the boys who the president of the class was. He pointed the boy out to me, and added:

"He has paid his way through school for four years by waiting on the table and is head waiter. He is the finest fellow and most respected on the campus."

The school is proving the worth of an actual and true democracy.

Some years ago when in the mountains of North Carolina I was obliged to make a speedy return to my parish in Baltimore. It necessitated my hiring a good driver to act promptly and expeditiously. An employe of the little hotel referred

me to a lad of 20 who worked for a liveryman. I arranged with him. He was a tall, clean-cut youth, who could drive like Jehu and still carefully. He spoke to his horses. He had no bad habits. I asked him what he meant to do in life. I shall never forget his frank, cheerful reply:

"I mean to be the best workman and the most reliable driver in North Carolina."

Such men dignify labor and make service glorious. The poet may sing:

"Work is worship,
Toil is holy,"

but he who serves his fellow men with zest and fidelity makes the old world a better place in which to live, and distances in character and conduct the man who has to be waited on, or the self-opinionated aristocrat.

"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister" and "The servant is not greater than his Lord."

UNDERSTANDING OTHERS

THE DIFFICULTY of understanding the position, to say nothing of the feelings, of others is apparent to every one who thinks. Misunderstandings seem to make up much of the actual relations of human life. We seem to be living in an age of misunderstanding. Perhaps we always think that is the case. Many good people, at any rate, believe they are not understood by most others.

The result is seen in all organized life: among those who represent capital and labor; among employers and those employed; among the leaders of different schools of thought in our universities and colleges, and most particularly in recent years among godly people in their religious definitions and attitudes.

This is not a unique tendency of the human mind, for literature in all ages points out a somewhat similar condition.

The French revolution was not merely the result of oppressive taxation and extravagant living, but grew out of an increasing sense of distrust and misunderstanding between differing classes of life and mind.

The novelist of today refers constantly to this failure of one to understand another, whether the writer depicts social, industrial, religious or personal life.

Today I have been reading an interesting novel by Mary W. Waller entitled "Deep in the Hearts of Men." Here is a characteristic sentence which illustrates our subject: "Sit down, Jean. I am going to tell you something. You say I can't understand you. I think I can, but I say you can't understand me, and of this I am sure." It is the same old condition worked out in another interesting bit of fiction, but it is typical of life.

How frequently, even among closest and dearest friends, we hear the words, "You do not understand me. You cannot get my point of view." How frequently the oldtime expression is repeated between men and women, "Oh, you are a man; you cannot understand," or, "You look at it from a woman's standpoint." Why this constant reiteration? Is there not some common ground?

Broken friendships, distrust, intolerance, unhappiness—all these, and much else which distresses—grow out of these very failures to understand others.

This should lead us to ask, Can man be understood by his fellow man? The solution must come from within rather than without. Others may not understand us, but we can understand others if we are willing to pay the price. Jesus was misunderstood, but he did not misunderstand others. He has told us that "the servant is not greater than his Lord." He said, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely," but "when he was reviled he reviled not again."

His attitude within constrained him and he understood when he himself was misunderstood.

Love begets love and faith develops love. It is not, after all, hard to understand those in whom we believe implicitly. Augustine said ere he died, "I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but I believe in order that I may understand." Here then is the secret.

If we would understand each other we must trust each other more, and then we may walk side by side and keep step one with another, even if our bodies and gaits vary. Our hearts will burn within us as the hearts of those on the Emmaus road if our Lord walks with us in the way.

THE HABIT OF INACTION

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS has written a popular and very suggestive little book entitled "Youth Prompts the Way." He shows clearly the practical value of health and spirit in keeping young. An interesting chapter is devoted to "The Fatal Habit of Inaction." This suggests our subject. Inaction is one of the signs of death. Inanimate things do not act except as forces outside influence them. The more life there is to express itself, the more certain one is to act. Age need not bring inertia unless the powers of life begin to wane and disintegrate. One may better go a little slower, but this does not signify that one must stop going.

The richest part of a man's life should be after he is 50. He has learned to discriminate. He should have accumulated wisdom, knowledge and material wherewith to live comfortably and sensibly.

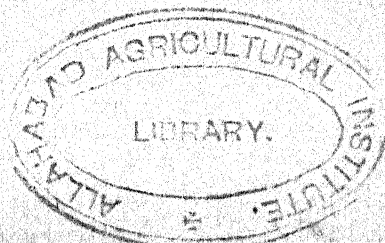
But this does not suggest that he should grow lazy and inactive. Many of our most alert and advancing men are well past middle life, but no one ever would think to call them lazy. Their activity is in evidence from the time they open

their eyes in the morning until they close them at night. They have learned to relax but not to somnambulize. Their vital step and cheerful smile arrest attention and awaken drowsy companions.

Activity is the demonstration of strength and courage in their nature. They value an easy chair in its place, but do not want to use one when before their desks. Such men and women are not afraid to consider and undertake new and larger tasks when convinced of their worthiness. Younger people are influenced by them and follow. Youth is inspired and made enthusiastic.

Outdoor exercise and proper natural exercise have their part. John Burroughs and Sheldon Jackson were photographed late in life as woodsmen tramping the forest.

Charles W. Eliot was even more active after four score years than many college presidents at 40. Chauncey Depew still causes men who hear him to discredit statements as to his actual age. These men never formed the "fatal habit of inaction." They have never been stopped on life's highway because they have "run out of gas," or because of dirty spark-plugs.



Activity of mind and heart lead to activity of body, and the reverse is true as well. Longfellow spoke wisely in his "Psalm of Life":

"Trust no future, howe'er pleasant;
Let the dead past bury its dead,
Act, act in the living present
Heart within and God o'erhead."

The gospels tell the story in the Saviour's parable of the pounds. He that wraps his pound away in lazy inactivity receives the just rebuke of his Master.

This truth applies to our money as well as to time and deed. Inactive accumulation of means may petrify a soul and stigmatize a life that is otherwise worthy.

"Use or lose" is not a mere trite saying, but one of far-reaching virtue.

We must not forget, however, that activity must be directed wisely. Just "to do" is not a substitute for doing that which is right. Action in itself is not enough. Wrong action is not to be commended simply because it is not inaction. Right action means right aim, purpose and plan. "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly,

to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" But the latter two must be preceded by the first—"do justly."

An active Christian life will put to shame the criticisms of godless men, and will keep the soul fresh, strong and vigorous. Such lives will never know the "fatal habit of inaction."

PATIENCE AND TOLERANCE

NO CHARACTERISTIC of Jesus Christ may mean more to our day than His infinite patience. The impetuous Peter, the enthusiastic John, the doubting Thomas, none of these ruffled the quiet control of His reserve. The "Fret not thyself" of David's poetic Psalm was an inherent element of His divine nature.

He had learned to "Labor and to wait." Why hasten the ebb or flow of the tide? Gradually and naturally, wave by wave, hour by hour, moment by moment, the result will come. To hasten the rising or setting of the sun would be to throw the whole earth into confusion and irregularity. His patience with men was even more noticeable. "Let them both grow until the harvest." He did not

rush to the deathbed of Lazarus, for He had power over life and death, and the Resurrection truth must be revealed.

Ever alert and immediate when occasion required, His life was not disturbed by the restless anxiety of the impetuous and excitable. He could bide the Father's time. "When the fullness of time was come" was His interpretation of Providential leading. Patience is then a Godlike quality. The oak gains not its sturdiness in a day or year; the diamond is not formed in a generation; the mountains were not brought forth yesterday. The soul that knows God can afford to "wait patiently" before Him.

In our zeal to win others, to accomplish, to attain, we rush into confusions and disorders. We stir up and arouse opposition. We cast aside the virtue and wisdom of confidence and consideration. We lose poise and power.

Impatience also lessens influence and destroys reliance. Men anticipate our return to undo what we do hastily and thoughtlessly. They do not take seriously our first acts, and wait for the recoil. But patience is not an act after all, but a state of mind; it is controlled inclination. "Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer," we sing; the

patience of mothers becomes through memory of the years a sacred tribute of hallowed association. The lives and natures we drive from us might be recovered and won by patience.

This qualification may be developed; for if the impetuous Peter gained it, all may. He it was who wrote in his first epistle of the "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you *who are kept* by the power of God." He also in his second letter admonished to "add to your self-control patience," saying that "he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off."

The tolerant spirit will naturally result from patience.

If we judge not hastily, and do not speak unguardedly, we will not misjudge or condemn our brethren simply because we differ from them in life's secondaries and the non-essentials.

"Other sheep have I," said Christ, "who are not of this fold." To know that His sheep know His voice and follow Him, is enough. It is not our duty to brand alike all who pasture in God's great individual pastures. They know His voice and He knows them. He tells us not as ministers to fold but to feed the sheep. When the folding time

comes the Great Shepherd will call and guide. Our concern must be to nourish and protect, not to separate and condemn. To love our brethren is a sign and evidence of loving Him, He tells us. The tolerant spirit is after all the Christ-like spirit, and after all the Lord knows those who are His.

THE SENSE OF HUMOR

NO ONE doubts the reasonableness and attraction of a cheerful disposition, but the stern fact remains that some do not possess it, and a joyful attitude toward life is not easy to cultivate without it. Everyone, however, may aim to look upon the bright side of life, and where there is a sense of humor it is far easier to do so. There are individuals who seem to lack this sense completely, but we assume that the number of such is far less than supposed, and that there are few who may not cultivate it aright if convinced of its value. In the old cathedral at Chester, a prayer is engraven which is noteworthy:

“Give me a good digestion, Lord,
And also something to digest;
Give me a healthy body, Lord,
With grace to keep it at its best.

Give me a healthy mind, good Lord,
To keep the good and pure in sight,
Which, seeing sin, is not appalled,
But finds a way to set it right.
Give me a mind that is not bored,
That does not whimper, whine or sigh.
Don't let me worry overmuch
About the fussy thing called I.
Give me a sense of humor, Lord,
Give me the grace to see a joke,
To get some happiness from life,
And pass it on to other folk."

This unique old prayer implies that health (both physical and mental), digestion, tranquillity, cheerfulness, high ideals and humor are related. The man who can see a bit of fun in life, no matter what the problem or pain, is the one whose life helps the other fellow, and proves a general blessing. Humor acts as a lubricator for the machinery of human society. Without it friction and irritation are sure to injure if not destroy.

Relationship and adjustment have much to do with every sphere of life, and the ability to get on affably with others is as real a question as this more vital one of self-support.

Cheerfulness assists, and cheerfulness is stimu-

lated by humor. A great leader of men of my acquaintance was having a most tedious and painful experience in dentistry but he kept his good spirits through it all most remarkably. Upon asking him how he stood it, he replied, "I'm rather enjoying the perplexity of my dentist and the variety of faces he can make as he works over me. He is the funniest man I ever met, and tackles every cavity, nerve and root as if he were carrying on guerilla warfare with a subtle foe. If I cry out or cringe he jumps nearly a foot, and inwardly cusses and outwardly reproves the pain-provoking member; sitting under him is like going to a new circus." Well, this man never gets fussed about anything, but he is always able to see the funny side.

Once at a funeral which had quite saddened the whole community, I saw the glint of humor in one of the relatives, and happened to ride out with him to the cemetery. He remarked, "Did you happen to notice that the two rival aldermen were both pall bearers, and that they persisted in stepping on one another's feet going down the steps? Surely death is no respecter of persons."

This uncalled-for personal reference, so unexpected and under the circumstances so intensely funny, broke the tension of an overstrained condition.

Humor is nowhere more valuable and evident than in apt repartee, where it frequently turns hard feeling and abusive language into good will and mirth.

Those who deal constantly with strained and serious problems cannot afford to lessen their sense of responsibility, nor minimize the importance of their tasks, but they can keep their sense of humor keen and alert. Such men are not anxious to see nor play the joke upon another, but are equally fun-loving and happy when humor places the jest on them.

GOOD READING

“**E**XCEPT a living man, there is nothing more wonderful than a book,” said Charles Kingsley. John Bright wrote: “What is a great love of books? It is something like a personal introduction to the great and good men of all past times.” Beecher said: “Books are the windows

through which the soul looks out." Ralph Waldo Emerson said: "Go with mean people and you will think life is mean. Then read Plutarch and the world is a proud place, peopled with men of positive quality, with heroes and demigods standing around us, who will not let us sleep." After these quotations from those so well fitted to estimate, we unhesitatingly say with Carlyle: "Wondrous, indeed, is the virtue of a true book."

And yet, appreciating the truth of these words, we of this present generation are in grave danger of living and dying without the knowledge which the best in literature might give. Schopenhauer says: "It is of paramount importance to acquire the art not to read; in other words, of not reading such books as occupy the public mind." This, taken in the extreme, would be wrong, but it certainly suggests the danger to which we allude. Many a man who can talk easily upon the flippant and quick famed writers of today knows nothing of the great standards of literary worth established by the past, and hence has no judgment in carefully discriminating the present writer of genuine and permanent worth. He is not a historical judge or critic, for he is not versed in such historians as Herodotus, Gibbon, Macaulay or our own Ban-

croft, Prescott or Parkman. The history of today may appeal to his patriotic zeal and national fervor, but as to appreciating that which is best, and judging from the true standards of historic literature, he cannot. Also in the political world of thought he possesses only a minimum knowledge. He cannot intelligently pass judgment either in criticism or in commendation, for he lacks a standard. Demosthenes and Cicero are simply names to him. He has never felt the thrill the Grecian felt when Demosthenes pleaded or sent forth his terrible philippics. Bright and Gladstone, Patrick Henry and Charles Sumner mean almost as little to him. True, he once delivered a declamation from Daniel Webster, and hence can quote from that great statesman, but scarcely dares pass judgment on the statesmen of today, or if, in bravado, he does so, he is conscious that his words do not "carry all before him."

The great essayists of today (for we have some whose names shall have permanent glory) are let alone by him because Bacon and Carlyle and Emerson and Charles Lamb are simply names on the backs of books, not living tiles in the groundwork of his literary floor. As to the novels which cover our library tables today, he listens to hear what

other people are saying and then expresses an opinion which will compromise harmoniously with all. He would not express any direct criticism for he might "offend someone's feelings." Neither would he appreciate any writer very feelingly, for if he did so he is inwardly conscious he might disclose his own ignorance. If it happens to be that the subject matter of the evening turns upon a discussion of Balzac, Victor Hugo, Thackeray, Dickens or Hawthorne he tries to say something about "Little Nell," "Bill Sykes" or to let people know that the "Scarlet Letter" was "really a large scarlet letter A." As to poetry, the class of readers which we have described generally rave over Wordsworth, Browning and Tennyson until you pin them down to definite quotations or memory, and then their poetic vocabulary suddenly diminishes into a poem or two of Kipling, or one of Eugene Field's lullabies; possibly a trite quotation from Shakespeare comes in as a friend in need from the bygone studious hours of schooldays.

Undoubtedly some of those who read are somewhat troubled already by the practical acknowledgment of what these words mean, but back of the ridiculous there stands a purpose firm and an honest hope born of such purpose. Why may we

not acquaint ourselves with the best in literature? Our libraries are open, helps are on every side, the time is ours just as much as it ever has belonged to the world. The busiest people are the most careful readers and the readers of the best. The newspaper, the weekly, the magazine, all have their place. This we do not hesitate to acknowledge and commend, but we plead for a more active appreciation of the best books.

We plead for good reading. The intelligent world will continue to laugh at the man who furnishes his house by telling his bookseller he wants "one yard of green books, one yard of red books and one yard of blue books;" or the man who thinks more of his bindings than of the pencil marks in his volumes. Christian intelligence today means an appreciation of the best things, and that library of libraries which tells the Christian man that he himself is a "living epistle read and known of all men" also shows throughout its teachings the high standard of faithful thought, study and action.

COURAGE TO BE LAUGHED AT

THE old proverb, "He laughs best who laughs last," is worth considerable in any critical age. There are two kinds of criticism prevalent; the one valuable, the other worthless and ruinous. The true scholar, who is both a thinker and student, naturally observes and passes judgment on all he sees about him. If his colleague errs, that very error awakens a just criticism, and he who errs manifests a true standard of scholarship in appreciating and profiting by his fellow critic. The other form of criticism is simply the result of a vacant mind. Incapable of sound judgment, his eye sees evil in that which is good; and, rogue-like in his own disposition, he ever defines other men as rogues. His listless spurning of society is called criticism, but it is really the moaning and complaint of a diseased and lazy intellect. However, the hectic flush of such criticism, especially when accompanied by the ridicule of laughter and the sneer of apparent superiority, we often mistake for a healthful complexion and thus give more attention to the speaker than we ought. Many a man has been laughed out of doing a noble deed or taking a manly and firm stand by

one from this latter class of self-termed critics. "Who is afraid to be laughed at?" says the youth as he looks forward with ambition to the work before him. And yet, nine out of every ten young men are afraid to be laughed at, and are kept from making decisions and standing by principles simply because of jeering companions.

The story is told of one who once dropped a loaf in the presence of Diogenes, and for fear of laughter would not pick it up. The great man saw an opportunity to teach him a lesson; and, tying a string about the neck of a bottle, he dragged it through the Ceramicus at Athens. People laughed at him, but, turning to his friend, he said: "Let them laugh! You see, I am not laughed down." That which he used as an extreme illustration reveals a determination and independence of action which is seldom seen.

It is a great danger to us all to put too much stress upon what people in the listlessness of ordinary speech say about us. Ere we know it we become creatures of fashion and mold our lives in the commonplace form of the ordinary. It is right that we should have a definite respect for custom and an appropriate manner, but when this robs the human life of individuality and the expression of

definite purpose in the execution of our moral character, we have become slaves to society.

"He laughs best who laughs last" can well be our thoughtful motto, as well as a simple proverb. The men who are now leading in every rank of profession and business life are men who have been above the laughter of the street; men who have closed their ears and pushed manfully forward when the sneer of the idler would balk their way.

"As is the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of a fool." Let us carry this figure into the exercise of our manhood and remember that those crackling thorns may give heat where heat is needed and produce the steam which shall act as a generating power in the advancement of our success. There was once a man, humble, lovable and divine, who was "laughed to scorn;" but nineteen centuries have not robbed Him of a power both concrete and abstract; a power which now lives in tens of thousands. This Christian courage is not daunted by the foolishness of the jester nor the indecision and jeering of the coward.

"I CARRY IT WITH ME"

GOING up North on the through express one night were a number of business and professional men, together with their families, en route for their summer outing. Golf sticks and fishing rods were much in evidence among the hand baggage. The train had been blocked by a wreck and was three hours late. Connection in Boston would be lost; general dissatisfaction was expressed. One of the party was looked upon as a Jonah, as he had volunteered the unfortunate remark that he had been on that train six times previously when it had always been late. Ordinary pleasantries of remark and conversation had passed between passengers, and upon leaving the train various good wishes for a pleasant summer were expressed.

As one of the party took up his grip to depart, his friend of a few hours said: "A good time to you during your vacation." "Thank you," was the reply; "I always take it with me."

This is the secret of happiness—not looking for a good time, but "taking a good time with you." Some depend on location, or weather, or companions, for their good time, always blaming their

environment, if anything is unpleasant. Others blame the climate or weather if they do not feel in prime condition; still others are constantly looking for pleasant and agreeable companions.

Our friend solved the problem more easily than all. His good time was resultant upon himself, and he was anything but self-centered or selfish in his spirit. The sun does not ask for a pleasant day; it makes one. The rain does not ask for refreshment; it gives it. The wind asks not for cool breezes, but brings them.

Joy and happiness must be incarnate in man if man is to be content. This is undoubtedly a process of development; few have such natural tendency. Paul said: "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content." It was not a gift to him, but a growth. It must be a growth with us all.

The life discontented with self will never be happy anywhere. The mountains, the woods, the sea, the golf links, the trout stream—none of these will give satisfying pleasures, for the inner life will be restless and ill at ease. With such a life the mountains will be too cold, the sea too damp, the golf course too hard, or he will top his ball too often or putt infernally. If trout fishing, his line

will always get hung when he hooks his fish, and life in general will be "a weary, dreary waste."

If he is boarding, the place will be too quiet, or the stranger's children will make too much noise, or the disagreeable woman will be at his table; in fact, he will wish he were at home, and undoubtedly most of the guests would not differ from him in sentiment.

On the contrary, the man who takes the good time "with him" is happy everywhere, and somehow he plays golf better, catches more fish, is most popular, and goes home, when the time comes, rested, and the possessor of new friends and most pleasant lifelong memories.

Life is a looking-glass—if you look therein with a frown, a frown you'll see; if you smile, life will smile back.

COME OR GO?

IN CAMPAIGNS to increase attendance at religious services most of the posters and advertisements used have borne the request or suggestion of "Go to Church." Is this the best way of presenting the invitation? "Come" is a better word than "Go." "Go" is the word of command. "Come"

is the word of invitation. It is far more difficult to get a man to do a thing if we tell him to do it in the command "go" than if we invite him to do it in the word "come." The scriptural word is "come." Noah did not say to his sons or to his wife, nor his sons to their wives, "Go into the ark." They said, "Come into the ark." God did not tell Noah himself to go in. He said "come," thus showing that God himself was there.

The word "come" implies the personal presence of the one who invites, and suggests not only the invitation but a welcome on the part of the one who invites.

Those who are regular attendants at the house of God need no added invitation to worship in this way, for the habit is fixed and the blessing received in church attendance is recognized. It is imperatively the duty of the church, however, to extend this invitation to others.

It is much easier to ask a man to "come along" than it is to tell him to "go." There is the natural inclination of accompaniment, association, friendly companionship.

If we can offer to accompany those who do not

usually attend church we will find a much more natural response on the part of those whom we invite. Church surroundings seem strange to those who are unaccustomed to being in a congregation assembled for worship. They do not know whom they are to meet; the church seems cold and formal, the church members may have the manner of strangers. To "go" means that you brave this yourself; the word "come" evidences that some one is waiting for you; that there is a spirit of welcome and good will. "Come thou with us and we will do thee good" is more than a scriptural text.

Recently a young man, on confessing Christ, was asked why he was led to the church. He said the music attracted him. "I was going by when I heard an old hymn with the strains of the great organ, and something in that music said to me, 'Come in.' I felt a welcome in the melody. I was urged by an inner inclination, and a thrill which responded within me prompted my entrance. I found a cordial welcome and a handclasp and cheerful faces, and the gospel message touched my heart. I have yielded my life and want openly to confess Christ."

No advertisement of the church, however effective in suggestion or admonition, can have as strong an influence as an earnest and personal invitation.

The Scripture is filled with the word "come." The Old Testament prophet's cry is "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow." Jesus himself said "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." An echo from the unseen world gives to us the words, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the things prepared for you from the foundation of the world," and the Revelation itself gives us the teaching, "and the Spirit and the Bride say come," "let him that is athirst say come," and "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Christ himself said, "I am come that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly."

We need the admonition of Christ, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel," and the added word, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest may send forth laborers into the harvest"; but these were

preceded by the simple invitation of our Lord when he said, "Come, follow me."

Let us change the motto "Go to Church" to the motto "Come to Church" and back up our invitation by a personal word whenever and wherever the opportunity is afforded.

TAKING CORRECTION

PRIDE not only "cometh before a fall," but also frequently interferes with our gaining success that might otherwise be achieved. Once we were looking with interest at the oil paintings of a somewhat crude but gifted artist. He had excellent color value and had secured exact and natural likeness in landscape and forest, but his water effects lacked life and motion; they were a cold gray without sparkle and ripple.

When expressing appreciation one of the party ventured to suggest a more vital life-touch to the stream. Immediately the artist was on the defensive. He affirmed that his water scenes were considered his best work. He suggested to the critic that he apparently did not know that stream,

Men "unfamiliar with brooks did not know water," he declared. His critic happened to be a nature lover of fifty years' experience and a brook fisherman of almost an equal period of time. He was also an art critic of a metropolitan gallery.

As the party left the studio a friend who had been interested said: "I had intended to patronize that man, but not now; his pride apparently keeps him from large success."

A true student, either of art or of human life, is ever alert to gain honest and constructive criticism. The self-satisfied and egotistic resent it.

Great souls hold unattained ideals; little souls feel they have attained.

Parents and teachers are often at fault in this regard in the happy pride in brilliant or precocious attainment that they exhibit, little realizing how such pride may become overdeveloped and retard growth.

Although idle and careless criticism need not be taken seriously nor followed, the person who listens appreciatively to the comments of a just and thoughtful critic is bound to improve.

Worthy criticism is invaluable to a growing

student or to an organization. Wholesome development depends much upon the attitude of mind of the one under criticism.

Orchestras of maximum merit seek and at times import critics of authority and fame to study and pass judgment on their work. They strive eagerly to note and use the suggestions offered.

A constant focus upon the same execution whether in art or music will sometimes blur or blunt the sensibility. An outside view is required accurately to measure merit or demerit.

The over-sensitive nature frequently is altogether unconscious of the false pride which really exists, and which unless checked will result in a growing egotism and arrested growth.

Very often those in public life fail to hear the adverse criticisms passed upon them. They are more likely to hear the flatterer who has something to gain by his flattery, and whose real belief and judgment will be expressed if at all to others.

Truth does not enter into the creed of the flattering critic. He speaks merely to please and gratify. He studies for effects with his smiling approval and his glib tongue, for he is not concerned

with actual worthiness. Only in the absence of the offender are real faults and criticisms expressed.

Life has not the critical freedom of a class room. Even our friends are reluctant to express unfavorable judgments lest they wound or displease.

We usually hear the best, not the worst, about ourselves—except when we have utterly failed.

One of our most successful and growing preachers was once asked to what influence he attributed his steady growth and power. His modest reply gave credit to his sympathetic and intelligent wife and to several elders in his church, who had confided in him through the years and given him frank criticisms of his speech and tendencies.

Constant criticism in the home or school may become nagging, especially if always in the negative and in a fault-finding manner. It may become a rare and influential discipline if wisely and graciously used.

The youth or adult who can take just criticism without defense, rebuff or ill will is bound to improve and grow, and will ever make friends as

well. The opposite attitude of mind which resents real and kindly criticism will stultify and embitter.

PARENTS: GO TO SCHOOL

THE PUBLIC and private schools of America are unsurpassed. Motoring through Colorado a few years ago, a prominent educator of the east was surprised and delighted with the type and quality of the school buildings and equipment. Attending later an institute of teachers, he was equally impressed by their quality and training. This might be noted in most of our states.

Public interest in the education of children and youth has grown quite generally during recent years. Naturally there is no question which impresses parents more seriously and in which there is a more definite interest.

Notwithstanding these facts, few parents or public leaders take the time to visit the schools which their children attend.

One of our best teachers who for over thirty years has held a place of large influence in a splendid school recently said that she had very seldom

met the parents of her children except in times of difficulty or in matters of discipline.

We seem to have or find time for life's business, for social duties and for personal pleasure, but relegate all personal interest in the school room to others. The visit of a parent in a class room causes embarrassment, sometimes provokes ridicule.

This is not a matter of intention but of oversight and neglect.

We would not suggest too frequent calling, but just an evidence of vital interest manifested by an occasional visit, or at least in making an effort to know pleasantly the one under whose care the child spends so much of his time.

The social element might well enter in also.

Another teacher told a group of friends when questioned that she had seldom been in the home of any of her scholars by invitation during twelve years of residence.

If the truth had been known, that teacher practically alone in the city had often eaten not only her Sunday dinner alone but at times her Thanksgiving and Christmas meals as well, in her board-

ing place or a nearby hotel. The children idolized her but the parents scarcely knew her.

Parent-aid organizations and kindred societies are now popular and are wisely discussing questions of importance in the training of children, but we plead for a more personal and friendly touch which would result in closer sympathy and happier relation, to say nothing of sparing those to whom we owe so much many a lonely hour.

Again, we might well consider the reflex influence of an occasional visit to our schoolrooms by parents themselves.

One busy morning last autumn I was invited to speak to a group of 1,600 boys and girls of one of our large high schools. The address was on a day of national significance and the student body arranged for speakers and program. I went under protest on account of duties multiplied, but I left with a feeling of gratitude for such a high privilege. Orderly, attentive, enthusiastic, that vast group of youth gave me, I am sure, more than I gave them, and I took up the problem of that busy week with new life, new hope and a new inspiration.

The schools are doing much for our boys and

girls. They will do much for us as well if we will let them.

THE NEED OF MEN

EVERYWHERE problems are facing men. They are problems great and small. Every organization and every nation faces them constantly. The more one considers them, the more they seem to multiply, the more complicated they seem to become. Whether in the commercial or industrial world, the scientific or scholastic, the political or religious, the social or personal, the general or individual; everywhere life is problematic.

Only the indifferent and careless can discredit or disregard the fact. Weaklings run from them, but the strong glory in them; problems both make men strong and make strong men.

Maltbie Babcock's little poem, "Be Strong," finds its echo in the heart of every stalwart soul. It calls to mind Paul's admonition to the early church, "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."

An age of prosperity is sometimes considered

free from problems, but this is false doctrine. Such an age is perhaps more completely filled with problems than even an age of failure or disaster. It is harder to keep strong when all runs smoothly than it is when one is battling against opposition. The incentive and inspiration are less.

The hour in which we are living is grave and difficult. Strength is needed to meet and conquer many a foe—subtle as well as open. Theories and philosophies of actions and methods multiply, but life's great problems are not thereby solved. Capital is not embracing labor, nor is poverty making love to wealth. Atheism and unbelief are not crowding into the sanctuaries of faith, nor are pessimism and fatalism studying the golden rule or impersonating the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians.

What then can be done? What is needed? Horace Mann answered the question when he said: "The question is not the founding of the school but the finding of the schoolmaster." Senator Ingalls answered it in the title to his little verse, "Give Me Men." Kipling gave us his reply in "The Man Behind the Gun."

But, better than all, John the Baptist uttered the

reply when he said to two of his disciples: "Behold, the Lamb of God." Manhood alone can meet the world's great need and solve its problems. And the highest and holiest type of manhood can only be found in him who, himself God, "became man and dwelt among us."

Recently it has been my privilege to meet several outstanding young men in the orient who are seeking earnestly to assist in answering the great questions which are perplexing their nations. These men are the exponents of the best training which east and west can afford. Their very faces, to say nothing of their thoughtful conversation, reveal strength of manhood, clarity of thought, firmness of faith and splendid resolve. They are the hope of the future. Their nations and the age are safe in their hands; unconsciously they are now solving the world's greatest problems. The great demand of education and Christianity is to find, develop and foster more such leaders.

Extensive work is demanded, and it will continue. But we must spend more time, thought and money upon intensive work also. Men are needed just now more than buildings and institutions. These will follow easily if men are found and

trained. And only as institutions and educational systems bring such lives into being are they worthy of support.

Our day must produce young men of whom kings can say, as they said of Joseph and Daniel: "Can we find such an one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God?"

HOW ABOUT SUNDAY AMUSEMENTS?

THE ATHLETIC hero of Shanghai is a man named Harry Kingman, who once played with the New York Yankees and is now a Y. M. C. A. worker among the men and boys at Shanghai. Harry will not play Sunday baseball, although he is the crack first baseman on the Shanghai team. Last summer the famous Keio University team, representing Japan, was playing the Shanghai nine of China. These games were sharply contested, and when Sunday came with the Japanese boys having three games and the Shanghai team only two, another victory for Japan meant the series. Gently but firmly Kingman refused to play. He had to endure lively criticism for thus adhering to his convictions.

In the Sunday game the Chinese team won and tied the series. On Monday they played the seventh and determining game. It was the last half of the last inning; the score was one to one. Kingman was at bat with a man on first. Then it was that he captured all Shanghai by lining out a deep three-base drive which went to the very limit of the field, bringing in the winning run.

The same issue of the "Shanghai Times" that printed the account of the game, giving Kingman credit, printed in full the reasons he gives for not playing Sunday baseball. I am quoting it in full, for no better word on this whole question has ever come to my notice:

"Since some of the most important baseball games held in Shanghai are played on Sunday, it is natural that a player who does not play Sunday baseball should feel that he is contributing less than his best service to his team. A conflict of loyalties makes his position a difficult one.

"Sunday observance by a Christian should not, of course, be mere fetishism. Christ, when he was living, criticized by the self-righteous people of his day for observing Sunday in a manner which they tagged as irreligious, remarked 'The Sabbath is

made for man, not man for the Sabbath.' Putting aside tradition and authority he seemed to confront every man with the problem of deciding for himself how best to use the day. . . .

"It is my conviction that for those of the new generation who are going to attempt solving some of the perplexing problems of present society there must be a more effective use of Sunday than as a playtime. Out of my experience in life has come the positive conviction that not material things but spiritual things rather are of the supremest significance. I recognize, of course, that there are many who are able to close their eyes to the truth, and that they will not concur with me in feeling that human beings need to set aside a time when by an effort of the will they hoist themselves out of the accustomed ruts and do some serious thinking on the things which are essential.

"But the God that I have slowly grown to know, since he lifted me from out the weak and unhappy existence that I was leading, somehow causes me to sense the unreasonableness of attempting to muddle through life without trying to understand more of it than I stumble across in my office, or on the street, or in the daily routine. . . The need for those who refuse to live an aimless, useless

existence, to regard Sunday as an opportunity to put themselves in the presence of the best that they can discover, is as vital a need as ever.

"I choose not to play Sunday baseball because I feel that it is less than the best use of the day for me, and because if I had any influence with those who are young, and who are still forming character and ideals I would throw it into the balance on the side of using Sunday in a manner which would give them a truer understanding of the things in life which really count.

"Some will not care for this statement. Of them I ask only an equal degree of tolerance toward my convictions which I display toward theirs."

This simple statement of Kingman's sums up the whole question, I think, in its strongest aspect. The worthwhileness of a pleasure is not in its temporary value but its constructive and permanent benefit. Sunday is worth preserving or reclaiming for high thinking and for its true relation to character growth.

USE AND ABUSE OF HUMOR

HUMOR saves many a life from destruction. One who can and does see the humorous seldom joins the increasing army of those afflicted with nervous prostration. The tension of life is relieved by fun, and merriment frequently drives away the dangerous symptoms of discouragement and melancholy. The wit or clown or fool filled a real place in the social order of Shakespeare's day and literature. His influence was felt both in hovel and palace. His ready answer saved many an angry dispute and turned men's thoughts away from strife to mirth.

Many a time a sad and serious soul dwelt beneath the outward aspect of a merry jester, but often his utterances helped to dispel grim grief and brought to the disturbed minds of others the relief of light and winsome thought.

It is a mistake to relegate fun to the careless, and to think of the jester as only a fool. Frequently he saves the day for the wearied traveler along life's checkered way. Often he transforms anxiety into confidence and folly into wisdom.

Genuine humor relieves the severe tension of human life, and we have none too much of it.

On the other hand, exhibiting humor merely for humor's sake is often unwise and tiresome. Spontaneity in mirth differs greatly from forced fun-making. The proverbial joker with his long-drawn-out stories and jokes becomes a bore and is avoided. Not so the man whose life is a song, and who everywhere sees the joyful and happy in his surroundings.

Greatest orators and lecturers have known this saving quality. Like a sweep of fresh air rushing into a close and musty room their good humor clears the air, relieves the strain and cheers the heart.

I have known experiences of great sorrow thus relieved by one who could see the humorous side of life. Broken by long watching beside the sick bed of a loved one, only to be rewarded by death's solemn grief, it seemed that the heart would break, but kindly humor saved the day. Tears would not flow in that dry grief. There came the reaction of a laugh in a ridiculous situation, and somehow the tension was broken. Tears easily flowed later to bathe the soul in a natural outflow of grief which gave relief and rest.

The man who has a clean, new humorous story to tell at the right time is as heartily welcomed as the man whose stories are ill-timed and old is shunned.

"Isn't he simply fine?" was the remark of a group of young people as an older man stepped from the automobile returning from the graveside. The man to whom reference was made had laid aside his active business that afternoon to attend the funeral with those young people so deeply stricken in the death of their father. He was their father's life-long friend, but knew the bewilderment and grief of the younger generation. Sympathetic, reverent, devoted, he had talked of other things on the way home. He had lifted their thoughts from their intense sorrow to the hope and cheer of life, and led them even through appropriate mirth and joy to a new and bright outlook for their new life.

Sorrow, grief and pain will ever fill this old world with baneful and saddening influences, but the "joy of the Lord" may show itself in those who see life with the glow of the morning sun following the depression of the dark and foreboding night.

THINKING EN ROUTE

THE suburban home has come to stay. Sunshine, good air and a grass plot are worth while. Distance has objected, but rapid and convenient transit have won. The novelty of coming and going soon wears off and then the reality of a half hour or more each morning or evening en route. How is the time to be spent? An hour comparatively lost each day represents over 4 per cent. of time. Darwin's biographer writes that the great scientist never allowed himself to waste a few spare minutes. His golden rule was "Taking care of the minutes."

The time spent on the train or trolley is generally put down in the profit and loss column; profit if the daily paper happens to be interesting, or if you meet a congenial companion; loss if the paper is quickly read or if left to yourself.

Why not utilize this time? The question is, *How?* The oculist tells us not to read. The occasion is seldom opportune for conversation. Hence a man looks into space or balances himself as he hangs onto a strap, or looks over and over again at the catch-the-eye advertisements in or out of the car. Few men have the power of thought-control beyond the suggestion of the eye. This

is the stock in trade of the advertising agent. Impulse follows the suggestion of the eye and leads to action. Why not train the inner eye of the mind to control the situation? A man who is trained to think can utilize profitably his transportation time.

He will not fail to see all that he needs to see; neither will he grow absent-minded, for the man who thinks is alive to what is going on. But he will make use of an amount of time he has practically thrown away before.

He need not think of his business; other things are of importance if his life is to be complete. If appealed to in the interests of general questions he often replies with the excuse of "no time." How about *this* time? One of our worth-while modern authors composed an entire work of two volumes en route to and from his suburban home. Page by page, chapter by chapter, it was clearly outlined by a live disciplined mind and then transferred to paper or dictated. He is one who always has a pleasant word or recognition for his friend as well. Thought-power is invaluable in filling the gaps of time. It is also pleasurable and stimulating. This applies as well to the man who walks. He can blend exercise of body with exercise of

mind. Oxygen and gray matter are kinsmen. A long walk is always short if in company with an interesting friend. Make yourself interesting by means of thought-activity.

The man who goes through the day, active and earnest, having the reserve power of high and developing thought, is the man with an influence. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." With this gift cultivated we would not spend all our time gazing at the same old "ads" over the windows or figuring out the new ones, but our sources of entertainment and thought would be within and not without. Suburban transportation would become a mind developer and we would find that "distance lends enchantment" in a new sense.

CONVERSATION

SYDNEY SMITH wrote, "Macaulay is like a book in breeches—he has occasional flashes of silence that make his conversation perfectly delightful." Dean Farrar of Canterbury once wrote of him: "I do not think that any great man has left on my mind so vivid an impression of his gifts in conversation as Lord Macaulay." These quotations call to our mind a subject dwelt upon all too

little. The present generation has been severely criticised as lacking in thoughtful conversational power. Men cannot meet even on a train and spend an hour or two together pleasantly unless someone produces a pack of cards or the news-boy supplies each with daily papers or a late novel.

We often hear the remark that men bore one another by their conversation. Boswell's Johnson says: "Tom Birch is as brisk as a bee in conversation, but no sooner does he take a pen in his hand than it becomes a torpedo to him and benumbs all his faculties." How about "Tom Birch" today? Is he alive, and are we encouraging his kind? We have a good many who could reverse his characteristic, of whom we might say: "He is as dull as can be in conversation, but inspired with a pen in his hand," for it must certainly be recognized that our age is producing multitudinous writers and developing publishing houses by the score. Are we, however, stimulating a like capability and effectiveness in conversation? Social engagements continue to entertain us in hours of home association and leisure, but the host or hostess is continually asking, "How can we amuse our guests?" After dinner it must be a theater party, card party,

or dance, or some professional musician or reader engaged to make the evening a success.

Some years ago one of the prominent society ladies of Paris took a firm stand in excluding the card table and dance from her home. The criticism which followed was promptly answered in her response, "I take this stand, for our visitors from other nations are saying that the ladies of Paris seem to be losing the charm and versatility of their conversational power." There is a lesson in this illustration for all who are thoughtful as to culture and mental development. Many who are capable of entering into almost any subject of conversation with vivacity and interest have been so surrounded socially by conventional and narrow amusements as to cripple or nullify the pleasures of conversing. So long has this gift been neglected that the didactic and blunt often enter into their social remarks. They either demand absolute and complete attention from the whole room when they speak or give the opinion to the one with whom they converse that they are conducting an oral examination, or cross-questioning in court.

In Johnson we read again, "Questioning is not the mode of conversation among gentlemen." Nowhere are the lines of true gentility more distinctly

seen than in conversation. If we would read more of that which is best instead of the worthless mush-room composition which is so general and broadcast, we could not but receive the inspiration of the writer.

It was said of Charles Kingsley not only as to his preaching, but also as to his conversation, that "he managed to create an electric sympathy between his hearers and himself—a sympathy caused by the depth of his sincerity and earnestness." When we realize what a student he was, of books as well as of men and nature, we see the secret of his attractiveness.

The same was true at a later time of Maltbie Babcock. His conversation scintillated, but he always kept it on the high level. A great deal of the teaching of Jesus was conversation. He talked and the world has listened through the centuries.

KEEP OUT OF THE FOG!

ONE of our great Americans asked the captain of an ocean liner if it was always foggy on the Newfoundland Banks. "I do not live here," was the reply, "you will have to ask another." Fog, however, seems to attract some people. They

seem to keep entirely out of the clear air. Cloudy days seem to attract them, mists and smoke appear to be their natural and agreeable atmosphere. If within doors and the sun shines they pull down the shades. Soon their lives are not only anxious, dubious and mysterious, but generally filled with gloom and discouragement. Why not get out of the fog? Do a little climbing and get above the clouds, start a draft and clear the smoke, stimulate the breeze and take up the mist. In other words, keep moving and keep in the sunshine and the fog will lift. A life befogged is not a happy nor a safe life. Foggy people are always *looking for trouble*. Because they cannot see clearly they run into their best friends and think them enemies. A useful hitching-post becomes a dangerous obstacle. The smile of a friend is interpreted as a grin and is preceded by the adjective "sarcastic" or "cynical." When conscious of the sun such lives look straight at it instead of seeing the light diffused by it, hence a befogged vision. Cold criticism and scorn take the place of cheerful appreciation. What is the secret of a happy life? "Sunlight," you reply. Yes, but sunlight must be of the soul as well as physical. If the inner light is clear it suggests a clear conscience, and natur-

ally the vision is clear, too, and takes life happily.

Once, when sailing off the rocky Massachusetts coast, we heard the distress guns of a vessel near at hand, being beaten up on one of the dangerous ledges. We could not approach her, for we were in a dead calm and surrounded by fog, helplessly drifting under the influence of an uncontrollable tide. If your life is in a fog, and if you lack the necessary breeze of enthusiasm and purpose, how impossible to help another in distress, and the unseen tide of self controls you mercilessly.

Get out of the fog! Make a rift through the cloud by the energy of a true life purpose. When the sun is up and the breeze stirs, those places and men, seemingly far distant in the fog, draw close together.

"If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."

UNDERGROUND THOUGHT

IN the opening chapter of Dr. Mabie's "Study Fire" we read: "Like the ancient river of Elis, thought flows on underground, and is perhaps all the deeper and sweeter because it does not flash

into speech." We are constantly reminded today that, irrespective of the superficial and rootless growth round about us, there are more men, proportionately, who think for themselves than ever before. The remarkable leadership given to men of thorough education, and the increasing demand for men of marked culture as leaders in all ranks of business and professional life, have placed a premium upon higher education.

We are surely living in a day of belief in foundation. The mammoth buildings which rear themselves thirty or forty stories into the upper air are not begun upon the surface of the ground. The great care and mechanism used in preparing the groundwork for the superstructure alone makes possible the safety of the building.

That which is true in the material world should be generally recognized in the realm of thought. Yet how many young men and women today are impatient and eager to quickly enter the wage-earning fray, thoughtless as to the foundation of skill and character upon which the human structure must rise. After years of discipline of slow growth and comparative failure, after the enthusiasm of young life and the exhilarating influence of that which is novel has become the stern reality

of every day, they then realize that the fault is not with the material used, neither with the plan of the Divine Architect; but the fault dates back to the foundations they individually have laid.

As our opening quotation says, the very silence of underground thought "deepens and sweetens life;" yet this very silence often occasions the very lack of popularity which preparatory work has. To the great silent forces in nature we bow in respect continually; before the great silent thought-forces of the intelligent world we instinctively show reverence also. Why not, then, conscientiously demand in the youthful training of our day a groundwork of thought power? Many a man turns to another and says: "What shall I do? What shall I say? Which way shall I turn?" Although bright in mental power, well equipped physically, having grown up in a healthful and cultured environment, he seems to be utterly lacking in the individuality of moral choice, and entirely dependent upon another.

This ought not so to be. Attention has constantly been called to the illustration age in which we live. Publishers and editors are forcing upon us the acceptance of truth as viewed in the picture (sketch or photograph) rather than in the rhetori-

cal figure or word-painting of pure and strong literature. This tendency in itself is destructive to mental power, if abused. If properly used without excess, it will strengthen and verify mental activity. Carried to the extreme, it forces the eye to do all, and makes the mind the sensitive plate of the human camera, dependent upon the work of the lens rather than the artist himself who sees the landscape before him, and then has the power within himself to reproduce the picture at whatever time or in whatever form he may desire. Perhaps the greatest temptation in the general sense which leads astray youth is that which flashes upon him in his thoughtlessness, and ere he stops to think his pleasure-loving inclination has conquered. If we can train ourselves and those about us to think before acting, and to act in accordance with our best thinking, we need not fear the practical result of our fundamental code of Christian ethics nor the future character of our young men and boys. Then life will be in harmony with pure thinking, for "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

"POOR BUT HONEST"

THE above title once appeared below a cartoon which pictured a beggar extending his tin cup to the passing crowd, his one eye open, and suspended from his shoulders the following sign: "Poor but Honest; Pity the Blind." He didn't get much. That weather eye gave away the plot. Some people think it is a disgrace to be poor, and this very class fail to realize that it is a genuine disgrace to be dishonest. The following sentence attracted the eye lately: "These men dare to be dishonest, but do not dare to seem poor." This brings before us a most interesting discussion as to some of the false standards of life. How many young men have the courage to look the world in the eye and fearlessly admit that they are poor, but honest and manly? We care too much what people think of us, and what people say, and not enough what the truth is. A great many men have the courage to enlist when the nation calls for volunteers who do not seem to have the courage to admit that they cannot afford to live as others do.

One of the strong mottoes of Mr. D. L. Moody when a young man of 22, in those early days of successful business life in Chicago, was; "They

say; what do they say? Let them say." No wonder he was successful. He had not been in that city five years before he was earning \$5000 a year, besides all the good in which he had a hand. I once heard of a young printer who earned only \$8 a week, and when asked by one of the overdressed boys on the corner why he didn't "put more cash into his clothes" replied: "I can't afford it; my pay goes to my widowed mother, who has four younger than I to clothe." And yet that lad earned more money than any other boy in the crowd. He had the right kind of nerve.

It is not to be understood that a man does himself any good by wearing poorer clothes than he can afford, nor by showing shabby habits, but only the man who dresses within his means and who takes proper care of what he has can be happy and honest; while the boy or man who does not will never be happy, and is liable to grow more and more dishonest. A crowd of young men of moderate circumstances were recently chatting on the veranda of the house of one of their number. They represented homes of hard-working parents. Most of their number were clerks or apprentices. One spoke up and said, "Well, boys, what makes a boy feel more like a man than a well-fitting din-

ner jacket?" "I can tell you," said the brightest boy of the lot, whose "dinner jacket" consisted of a sensible double-breasted Scotch tweed. All looked his way. "A suit that's paid for," he replied; and for some reason only one or two saw the joke. If the tailor had been there, he would have seen it.

This fact is most noticeable everywhere, not only as to clothing, but in countless other things. Statistics tell us that a larger proportion of intelligent young men remain single than formerly. Why? Because they haven't the courage to marry and begin where their fathers began. Yes, but you say, "That would not be possible today. Rents are higher, society demands more. One cannot cut off everything." And the young man adds, "No young woman of today cares to marry unless you can set before her a good-sized income." Now, this is not true, although there may be some degree of truth in it. Society does demand more, and rents are higher, but there are countless ways of beginning life on an economical scale when there is courage enough to be above the idle gossip of mischief makers. And we believe it is a libel on the young womanhood of today to say that women are not willing to sacrifice to have a home of their own where there is true love. It is not the name

tag on the back of the necktie that counts so much as the character tag on his heart and brain. Abraham Lincoln wasn't ashamed of his poverty and he often frankly admitted he could not afford certain luxuries. We despise the habitual criers of "Poor mouth!" They are a mongrel tribe at best. We likewise hate the miser who advertises his hypocritical poverty to add to his bank account; but we admire the man of honest conviction who has the courage to admit that he is poor. I know a man who went through two years of advanced university training with one pair of trousers, and they were always creased, too. His money was scarce, but no one ever misjudged him, and today he is showing that same courage and manhood in a thousand leading influences. "The clothes do not make the man" is the old adage, but sometimes a false estimate of life tries to refute this axiom. Not one word have we to say against freedom in all matters of personal decorum and dress. A man has a right to do as he desires with his own. But let others do the same.

Let us cease to force young men to live beyond their means. Let us compel them to live within their means, if they are to command our respect. Thummel said, "One gains courage by showing

himself poor; in that manner one robs poverty of its sharpest sting."

Honest poverty has a champion in Jesus of Nazareth. The honest poor in this world have too many noble names amid their kith and kin ever to hang the head.

WHAT ARE WE THINKING ABOUT?

"A PENNY for your thoughts." The loving mother spoke. Whistling a popular air, the boy had bustled in from school. But instead of showing the usual restless activity of the play-hour, he had fallen into reverie. He did not know he was looking off into space; but some new imagination, some form of "air castle," for the moment controlled him. The mother's heart had taken in the whole situation and loving curiosity spoke. More rightly than she had thought, she placed a valuation on his mood.

"A penny for your thoughts." That which controls a boy's thoughts foretells his future and defines his character.

An English essayist has wisely said: "Observe what direction your thoughts and feelings most readily take when you are alone, and you will

then form a tolerably correct opinion of your real self." It is another way of saying, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

It is equally true with manhood. Many of us today do not do much thinking, anyway. We are likely to act without thinking. There may be a quick process of suggestion; but this is not really thought. The tendency is to make ourselves into machines. We do what we are accustomed to do. The pressure and strain of life drive us from one duty or pleasure to another with scarcely time to think.

This is not always true, however, as to our business. Men plan their enterprises and think them through constructively before beginning. The constructive men today are the conservative, thoughtful men. They gain this very reputation because of their thinking ability. They think quickly, but they think. Farsightedness characterizes their wisdom, and the immediate matter is met with the assuredness of the man who knows what he is about.

Thoughtfulness in personal or civic enterprise is a recognized asset. But should it stop there? If the brain and body become wearied with life's material projects so that we cannot give our best

selves to high thinking, are we making the most of life?

Physical weariness frequently results from an overstrained mental consideration of material things, without the counterbalance of higher thinking. Mental exhaustion results. The human mind needs the saving gospel of diversion if it is to grow into its highest self.

One of the most successful railroad lawyers of our day, connected with a firm which for twenty years had the reputation of never losing a case, was the quietly recognized authority in his city and state upon the best in religious literature. Ministers constantly sought his counsel and deferred to his broad intelligence. But this reading had been to him merely his gospel of diversion.

One of our ablest modern writers, whose pen has given us almost a score of helpful books, has scarcely given more than an hour a day to this form of activity. Instead of a burden, it has been a pleasure—a sort of literary playground within his own home and library.

But these men have been thinking men. Their minds have always been alert and keenly sensitive. The multiplied scenes of every day have inscribed themselves in the notebook of the mind.

Such men are interesting conversationalists. They do not talk about others, but about things. They control conversation without ostentation or effort, and slay gossip. They stimulate meditation in the lives of others. They are never forced to "kill time" when they are alone.

The thoughtful soul looks out rather than in. Thoughtful men are the strong forces not only in creating elevating ideals, but in attaining God-like standards. Paul outlined a thoughtful policy when he wrote to the Philippians, "Whatsoever things are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous and praiseworthy, think on these things." No wonder he could preface these words by saying, "Be anxious for nothing."

The man of Christlike thought is not worrying about the lesser details of life. Such thinking will do away with idle retrospect as well. Paul also wrote, "Forgetting the things which are behind and reaching forward."

Thought cultivates thoughtfulness. "Evil is wrought from lack of thought, as well as from lack of heart." Christian sympathy and Christian thoughtfulness are companions. Philanthropy and Christianity go hand in hand. We must think for God, and think for man. And if we are willing

to give ourselves the chance to grow into the men we *can* be in this busy, work-a-day world, we must take time to think.

LETTER WRITING

“IT is your turn to write” is a very commonplace phrase at the close of a summer outing or when old friends meet one another. Perhaps it is fair to say the expression is not as common as it used to be. It is looked upon as a remark rather out of date, for, confess it or not, letter writing is fast becoming a lost art. The general publication of news by the press has somewhat occasioned this. Not that the postage stamp is less popular, for the recent statistics of our national Postoffice Department show a marvelous increase. Commercialism, multiplicity of organization, the extent of social functions and formalisms, the growth of wedding gifts and Yuletide tokens, and countless other acknowledgments, have proved profitable to Uncle Sam. Speed of transportation, systematic postoffice delivery, rapid transit, the special delivery stamp, and the Air Line Service have also done their part. Typewriting machines, operators, stenographers, duplicating machines,

graphophones, must not be overlooked. According to this definition of letter writing or correspondence, our first statement is ridiculed. But this is not letter writing; it is mechanical execution. It may have a great deal to do with the mind and may be in perfect harmony with the rapid spirit of our generation. It may reveal great physical capability, but it certainly limits the heart in its work of sympathy and sentiment.

Perhaps we can express our thought best in a simple illustration recently written in a weekly religious paper. A young woman of rare promise had left her cultured rural home in Maine to enter college. As she left her parents she said to her mother, "I will write to you every day." She kept her word, not only through college, but afterward, through her professional life in Boston. The article went on to depict how that quiet home kept in perfect touch and parallel culture with the daughter. The long winter evenings were filled with college reminiscences. The Maine home grew into a sort of university outpost. The culture and art of Europe in after years became a panorama on the humble walls of that country home. The flickering fireplace pictured the bright realities of the loved one's journeyings.

We see now what the art of letter writing may be. That young lady had made it a regular duty of her life, irrespective of her ever-increasing duties, to write something of her life. That home circle was never broken. She wrote the letter just as regularly as she slept, ate and bathed. Some would say that this made it mechanical. When we criticize faithfulness as mechanical we oftentimes err in order to excuse our own neglect. Who can read the letters of Phillips Brooks to his mother without moistened eye and grateful heart? We have been influenced even more by the life and letters of Frederick W. Robertson than by his renowned sermons. The letters of Robert Louis Stevenson show us his sunlit life far more than his general writings. The tender, controlling home influence of Queen Victoria was held firm by her messages of love, her queenly letters of purest motherhood. The courts of Europe were a part of her home circle through these tokens of love.

The epistles of the New Testament are the letters of the early church. The gospels of the Christ may well be termed His letters to humanity. If letter writing becomes a lost art to you, mark well the fact that so long as love and the home live it will never be a lost art to mankind.

THE BEST FOR HOME

THE test of a man's genuine piety is not his ability to discuss religious problems nor his willingness to assist in public service, but his daily life in the home. This fact should prompt us to value more highly the commonplace relations of life.

Unless love adorn the fireside, no expenditure of art or money will suffice. We are in danger of letting our present external life rob us of the greater blessings of the ordinary, for we are being allured by the lesser gifts of the extraordinary. Life's greatest values are those gained through common things.

Our homes, our children, our nearest friends, are priceless. Are we valuing them aright? Are we giving to them our best selves, or are our homes, our children, our friends, receiving from us that which is left after we have expended our energies and time on life's externals.

Suppose a man enlarges his business, increases his bank account, broadens his circle of acquaintances, and all this by neglecting his home, his children and his real friends! What is the result after a period of ten or twenty years? He has accumulated but he has lost the chance of utilizing his pos-

sessions. His home has lost its charm, his children are men and women, his friends scattered or gone.

Has the accumulation been worth the price? His very personality and affection have been recklessly distributed instead of expended upon those whom he really loves the most. This prompts us to ask if our Christian faith and character do not demand the expression of our best selves in the common-places of our lives.

The life we live with those who are nearest and dearest to us; the words, "father, mother, husband, wife, son, daughter, brother, sister," are the fondest words on earth, and around them cluster the dearest scenes and memoirs of life. A fireplace is not necessarily a fireside, nor a house a home, but the sacredness of these very words should prompt love, loyalty and devotion sufficient to transform any house into a real home.

In the olden days the parlor used to be shut up and only opened upon special occasions. When the minister called he was likely to be shown into a musty, close room, the curtains of which were lifted and the windows opened for perhaps the first time in weeks. The chairs and pictures were covered. The children were never allowed to enter the room.

This same spirit prompted the housewife to use the old broken china day after day. Consternation ruled when the small boy spoke up at the table and told the visitor he was glad he was there because they had the best dishes and good things to eat when he came. In other words, anything would do for the family and for the home, but the best possible was not good enough for the stranger who came within the gates.

This was putting the best foot forward before strangers. But what difference did it make whether the stranger formed the highest estimate of the home or not? Far better that those who love each other the most should have the highest and the best their own can give.

"Come again," said the small boy to his father's friend, "Dad is not cross when you are here." No wonder the small boy disappeared quickly when the stranger was gone, but he had told the truth, and that boy did not need punishment half so much as the father needed the rebuke which the child had unwittingly given.

The quiet voice, the soft tone, the gentle suggestion or reproof have far more influence than their noisier counterparts. The best that we can give is none too good for the familiar scenes of

home life. Thoughtfulness and gentleness day by day within the home will mould character and develop affection. Close friendships will mean more than ever before.

When sickness, accident, sorrow or death comes into the home, hearts draw close together in sympathy and devotion. But how frequently that sympathy comes and goes; how often it is short-lived. It ought to be the abiding condition.

A courtly educator of the last generation defined a gentleman as "one who valued the little amenities of life among those of his own flesh and blood." His definition is sound and is a fitting conclusion to our thought.

"Old friends, old scenes, will lovelier be,
As more of heaven in each we see:
Some softening gleam of love and prayer
Shall dawn on every cross and care."

MEDITATION AND POWER

SOME TIME AGO in a moving-picture entertainment in Shanghai there was exhibited a series of pictures illustrating the training of the troops of a certain progressive general. After this man had stated a serious truth, such as the golden

rule, he would ask his soldiers to meditate upon it for a time; and all with bowed heads would do so. He himself remained thus in controlled, concentrated meditation before entering upon another line of thought.

Such a course cannot fail to impress truth as well as train the mind. It also tends to development of the selective and discriminating sense of relative values.

Train men to think right, and we train them to act right: Whatsoever a man "thinketh within himself, so is he."

We may well consider the value of meditation in an age when so many are rushing into action and thinking afterward. The habit of meditation, which can be acquired, will do much to increase confidence and insure wisdom. It may be used to advantage in reading, writing, speaking and listening and also in praying.

Listless reading tends to injure the memory and create a superficial and excitable taste for worthless literature. As for the writer who rambles on and sacrifices quality for quantity, he may produce a new book every six months, but in even less time his work will grow old and be forgotten.

This type of writing grows out of a mercenary

aim in which one's very thought becomes commercialized; the height of ambition centers in the words "best seller."

Public speakers may well consider the desirability of careful meditation. It is not enough to talk well upon a given subject, or even to say considerable upon it. Real value lies in speaking so clearly and with such discrimination that one's hearers, too, can meditate upon the utterance.

Many preachers, lecturers and teachers talk too rapidly and say too much. Well-chosen words and well-framed sentences are needed in order to clothe well-meditated truth.

The length of a discourse does not insure its worth. Many a fine sermon has been devitalized by the last ten minutes of added superfluity.

"I love to hear that man speak," said a successful business man, referring to his pastor. "He always knows what he is going to say, and when he has said it he stops." It is not to be wondered that the minister to whom he referred is influential and powerful in his city. He is known as a thinker as well as a preacher. He has learned the value of meditation.

Prayer, both private and public, needs the medi-

tative as well as the reverential quality. If we are thoughtful before engaging in conversation with some one of earthly renown, why should we not be doubly so before addressing the infinite and eternal God?

How strengthening and refreshing it is to hear one lead in prayer who has thought through what he says, and whose well-selected utterance does not lose naturalness in its expression.

It is said that "he who prays best thinks best," and we would also say that he who thinks best prays best.

Meditation poises the life. It affords calm and composure instead of anxiety and nervousness. Thinking souls do not get excited easily. Few meditating men and women get nervous prostration or patronize sanitariums. With patience they "possess their souls," and this patience is associated in Scripture with "quietness and confidence."

Recently the President of the United States, as the guest of Chicago's Commercial Club, addressed a representative group of the city's people. He spoke briefly and with telling effect. As he left the dining hall of the Drake Hotel a man at my side said: "He had thought it all through care-

fully. How fine it is to hear a great leader speak when meditation and experience blend." He was right. Men strong in meditation are influencing the present and molding the future.

"Whatsoever things are true, think on those things."

REMEMBERING MOTHER

THERE IS no doubt that "special days" have multiplied too much in the church calendar. There are those who would specialize every Sunday throughout the year, leaving no subject choices to the pastor. Nevertheless, we are heartily in favor of "Mother's day," with all the significance and sentiment which it includes.

That observance recalls to every son and daughter the love and devotion of the old home. It touches the heart anew with a sense of sympathy and real affection. It brings back youth and boyhood. We see again the old trees we loved as little children; we play upon the old lawns and climb the same fences; we walk to church on Sunday morning hand in hand with mother, and sit in the old straight pew as long as we can, only to succumb to drowsiness and find a pillow in

mother's lap until we are aroused as the congregation rises for the closing hymn. The day recalls memories of brothers and sisters and of father with his firm command—never to be disobeyed!

"Mother's day" recalls to us the nursery rhymes of those early days: the quiet tunes mother sang in lullaby when darkness crept into the nursery. It suggests a sweet, loving voice which kept humming through an old tune in the kitchen as she finished up the dishes—and we recall our part in the washing and wiping of those same dishes, too.

This sweet day of recollection sends our memories off with a thousand thoughts that come and go as if we were turning the pages of an old album.

Yes, it is well to observe and value the day sacred to the memories of our mothers. The white carnation has won a place for itself on the lapel of every coat worn by a mother's son or daughter.

It is a day for action as well as sentiment. Letters should be written home if mothers and fathers still live. If they do not, write to a brother or sister whom that mother loved as she loved you. "Keep the home fires burning" in the heart. Write

to an uncle or aunt or cousin or old family friend, some one who loved your mother and home.

If your mother is living and you are at home, let her feel and know the joy of a living affection. Flowers are good, but an added caress is better.

I recall a mother whose life was filled with perplexity and trial, but who never lost her sweetness and grace. One day when asked why she was always so cheerful, she replied:

"The affection and thoughtfulness of my children will not let me be otherwise."

They were never too busy to call at her home, to call her up by phone and inquire for her health. They valued her living smile and did not wait for a funeral to send flowers. They believed "a rose to the living is more than countless wreaths to the dead."

Mothers never tell the longings and heartaches, the hopes and fears they have for their children, but they have them just the same and any day or occasion which makes us more thoughtful of them and adds to our recognition of their loving motherhood is well worth universal observance.

It is also a day to think upon those things which our mothers valued. Home should be sweeter, the

church stronger, good will more general because of Mother's day.

One afternoon, twenty years ago or more, when calling in my parish in Baltimore, I found a dear old lady who could not keep tears of joy back as she talked with me. She had brought downstairs with her a letter. As soon as she could she told me of its contents. It was from her son in New York. For years she had not heard from him. They had been estranged through an unhappy marriage. The letter told her he had come to himself and wanted to come home and be "her boy again." It went on to tell of his loneliness since his wife's death; of the false pride which had kept him from writing to her. Then he broke down and told her he was coming home just as if he were her child again.

Years later he came again when that mother was laid in her quiet earthly resting place, but those years in the interval had been years of constant joy and peace to that old saint of a mother.

Mother's day has come to stay. Don't miss the joy of it.

READING TO CHILDREN

MANY a parent realizes the joy of little children when their youngsters are no longer little. Almost before one realizes it the boy of yesterday is the man of today, and the chance of enjoying children's companionship is over unless a man makes it a point to enjoy his grandchildren in a way he seldom did his own children. Reading to and with children, one of the happiest and most profitable experiences older people can have, is not appreciated as it should be. Children's minds and imaginations are wide open and most receptive. They are alert and eager and, the habit once formed, they will prefer it to almost any other form of quiet entertainment.

Of course, selection and judgment are needed, and temperaments should be studied as well, but when adaptability and choice material are united the result will be favorable and delightful.

This experience will also recall and renew many of the long-forgotten tales and joys of one's own childhood. Stories long forgotten will return to awaken delightful memories and stir the heart afresh. The result will be most helpful to the boy or girl not only in creating the habit of good read-

ing, but it will have the added result of binding the young to older lives in natural companionship and enjoyment.

Children gain much by such influence, and parents and friends are kept young.

"Why do you always seem such a chum with your children?" asked a friend of his neighbor.

"Well," was the prompt reply, "I don't know, but we have read together about an hour every evening after dinner for several years, and I guess we have grown to know each other pretty well."

It is not necessary to add that his children were the right kind.

When a boy it was my privilege one summer to spend two months in the beautiful country home of a friend of my mother's. I was employed, but was taken as one of the family. The woman was an old teacher and knew the value of good books. She was the most interesting and best reader I have ever known. She read rapidly, distinctly and with fervor, although her tones were always low and her inflections quiet. That summer she read Edward Eggleston's "Hoosier Schoolmaster," Lew Wallace's "Ben Hur" and several other such books.

I have never forgotten them and the delight of those evenings around the large fireplace reading aloud.

Sometimes she would turn to one of us and ask us to read, but the contrast was too great and soon the book would be back in her hands.

I have always felt a deep sense of gratitude to that woman of a generation ago. She taught us all the joy of good reading and many other accompanying lessons of value.

Children are not only anxious to be led in their reading but will respond quickly to other suggestions given by one who will take the time to read and think with them.

The years are all too short and fly with rapidity, but hours thus spent are golden in present worth and future memory.

To read with a boy or girl and gain the confidence and friendship attendant upon it is worth more than supplying the child with teachers, toys or money.

Those to whom we give ourselves are those who love us, and those whom we really learn to love.

How many fathers would find a new purpose and interest in life and home if they would, by the

means of reading together, "let a little child lead them"?

THE VALUE OF GOOD WILL

IN BUSINESS, "good will" is never undervalued. It is recognized as a most desirable and necessary asset. The good name of a firm is sometimes worth as much in wholesome advertising as the quality of the product or commodity sold. Certain firms are known the world over as reliable and strictly trustworthy. The honored names of institutions frequently hold the same position.

A degree from some colleges and universities means as much as it means little or nothing from others.

This same good will applies to a life, and men should be so appraised. Character counts, whether it exists in business, education or national life. The Scripture speaks with vital truth in the words, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches."

To disregard reputation is not only egotistic but it is exceedingly foolish. It is true that self-respect, and possession of high qualities is more

valuable than reputation. But the two usually attend one another.

The tendency which has grown somewhat of late to disregard and ridicule the conventionalities of society is not creditable, nor is it acceptable to thoughtful men and women. The best customs of any Christian land have not grown out of narrow definitions nor senseless habits; but usually represent the sane judgment and gradual advance of high-minded people. Youth craves liberty, and in our own day is permitted to use it most freely, but youth shows no wisdom in utterly ignoring the value of good will.

This somewhat undefinable quality cannot be acquired by mere desire, but results from actual worth, and such worth is not accidental. Good will should not be confused with popularity. It is one thing to be popular and quite another to have genuine good will, though both may become identical.

Some become too popular to be powerful, because their popularity has been bought too dearly. A craving to be popular generally becomes quite evident. The discovery of it destroys the possi-

bility of acquisition and frequently leads to ridicule. On the other hand, it is natural to be pleased by appreciation, and those possessing genuine worth need not feel abashed or sensitive at such recognition.

In commercial life the term "good will" has varied interpretations, but without it credit is not easily obtained nor growth in business assured.

Personality has much to do with all forms and conditions of leadership and success, and it has also much to do with good will. A strong, winsome, manly, wholesome person makes friends easily, holds and intensifies friendships already made. This builds good will and extends influence.

Whether such lives are in the marts of trade, in office, church, club or home, good will and friendship seem to follow them. Men like them; business trusts them; children run to them and society responds to them. They make the right leaders in all walks of life. They make society what it is. They have the good will of their fellows and carry it into all they do and represent.

No one had the good will of all classes of people more than the Saviour himself. "All men seek for thee" was true, but He never sacrificed character.

HEALTH AND COMMON SENSE III

The Pharisees saw this and sought to destroy it, but even the cross was powerless to kill that good will, for it is stronger today than ever.

This Christian good will is the greatest asset of the church today and must be sustained and perpetuated. It is another way of speaking the truth of the golden rule, so popular in the utterance and thought of men today, for as "we do unto others as we would that they should do unto us" we value aright good will.

HEALTH AND COMMON SENSE

LIFE without health becomes a burden which force of character and patient self-control may lessen but not eliminate. Health means freedom—freedom of mind, limb and heart. The ready mind, the alert body, the clear eye disclose health just as weakness, pain and worry announce illness.

We are certainly punished by our physical sins, whether or not we suffer for them. Nature seldom directs our attention to our carelessness until we have overdrawn our physical bank account; and then, unkind as it may seem, she refuses to make the account good by immediate deposits.

"What are you doing over here?" asked a traveler who unexpectedly had met a fellow citizen at a foreign health resort.

"I'm spending to get back again what I lost in making what I have to spend," was the response.

Losing health in getting money means losing money in getting health; only, the regaining is not so easy a matter. And, after all, there is a common-sense way of gaining and maintaining health. The best gifts of God are the freest and easiest of access. The health of nature teaches us the nature of health. Sunshine, air, food, exercise, water, sleep and happiness are the great health givers. The body demands care more than medicine, and the mind works in sympathy with the body.

Spring comes upon us with its abundance of these natural agencies. The mornings are glorious, the air clear; the robins are singing from the gray of dawn, and all nature unfolds to beauty and happiness as the old sun lifts himself slowly from the horizon. A morning walk will fill the lungs with oxygen, the ears with music, the eyes with sunshine, and the heart with happiness. "Effort?" Of course it means effort, but the worth-while usually does. It is wonderful what the morning sun will do to better a man's disposition.

Food has a larger part to play in our health than we are willing to admit. Overfed, we naturally are overtired and inactive. Specialists and physicians tell us we eat too much. We value their counsel but keep right on until it is too late to form better habits. "Many of the diseases of modern life," writes a great food authority, "are the direct results of overeating and overdrinking."

Temperance is narrowed in the real definition when it is confined to drink. The words "wet" and "dry" are opposites in the temperance vocabulary, but we forget that there is a vast amount of dry intemperance among even temperance advocates.

"Take care of the body," is a text we all need in the common-sense health instruction of the present. With our body we must live and with it our work must be done. The strongest factors in history have been men and women who have used their mature and senior years in vigorous and wise leadership. Counsel is sought from those who have long known the field of conquest. Youth is enthusiastic and virile, but age should bring its increasing capability, not a diminution of serviceability.

And if the laws of health have become a habit of life this is the natural result.

Recently in commenting on the splendid health and vigor of a man past 50, who looked as young as his grown-up sons, his friend replied: "Yes, but for twenty years he has taken care of himself. He is in as good physical condition today as when he was an athlete in school—yes, even better."

God demands our best. We cannot do our best with a neglected body. No man can fail in common-sense precautions against disease and vitality-weakening old age without finally reaping his sorrowful harvest.

At least make the effort. We cannot all be notably young at 50, but certainly most of us if we begin in time can avoid being notably old at 60.

CHANGING THE FACE

THE CHANGED expression and the happy face is about the first thing one notices in the native convert of China, Korea or Japan, as well as in other lands where Christian missionaries have gone. Happiness seems to have taken the place of indifference and passivity. It is not difficult to

pick out the Christians by their very faces and their alert interest in others. Idle curiosity gives place to sympathetic response and confidence.

This is particularly evident among those who have grown in spiritual life and leadership. No finer faces, both in strength and sweetness of character, can be found than those of many of the native leaders of Christian enterprise in the orient.

Hard work is the law of those lands. Burdensome toil bends the backs of men, women and children. Even the children at their play have to bear their loads. It is a common sight to see an 8-year-old girl, small at best, carrying a wee baby sister bound to her back. Yet these urchins join most merrily in their play. None seem so happy as those in the Bible schools on Sunday and the daily vacation Bible schools during the week.

It is a joy to go into one of the large kindergartens in Korea or Japan and see the boundless joy in the little children's faces. Lines and wrinkles, so often beginning very early in the faces of little boys and girls, give place to smiles and radiant joy.

The homes as well as the faces show the joy of

Christian belief, and cleanliness and order take the place of filth and chaos.

One day in crossing the river at Canton in a small sampan we turned to the little cupboard cabin behind us to open its sliding door and see the boatman's little shrine, his family god. We saw nothing but clothing. The happy-faced owner called out to us as he saw our object, "Mr. Christian, no more idol." His face also told a story, and the boat, clean and in order, added significance.

Sorrow, hardship, poverty, hopelessness and sin have deepened the furrows on the faces of heathendom, but the love of Christ is removing those scars and transforming the faces of those who have found "The Light of the World." "Love, joy, peace," is God's order. When his love comes into a life, joy follows.

Think for a moment of the faces of God's saints. What wonderful faces he has developed!

A. J. Gordon once called forth from a doubting college student who heard and saw him the remark: "That man's face would convert me to a belief in Christ."

Phillips Brooks was once heralded as "the man with a face like God."

John G. Paton, J. Hudson Taylor, Henry Drummond and Henry Clay Trumbull won the students at Northfield a generation ago by their very faces before they uttered a word.

The face is, after all, a reflection as well as a revealer of the soul within.

Probably the very face of the dying Stephen was a pre-Damascus road vision of Christ to the persecuting Saul of Tarsus.

No wonder Peter spoke impulsively on the Mount of Transfiguration and desired to remain when we read that "his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light."

If we can live in the presence of Christ in every-day life and make our religion an Every-Day Religion, our very faces will reveal him, for "We all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit."

MAKING NEW FRIENDS

FRIENDSHIP is the choicest of God's gifts, for it cannot be taken from us and abides through life and death. We think of our friends as still being our friends when they leave us. The gallery of friendship becomes filled increasingly as the years pass with those who have gone ahead into the eternal life, but we never take their faces nor lives from that gallery. Old friends like old books are our joy and blessing. But they should never take from us the happiness and development of making new friendships. He who can make new friends never grows old. This is especially true if one can make friends among the young and so keep in touch with the real spirit of youth. There is no surer sign of age creeping over us and controlling us than to tire of people and desire no new companionship or friendship. The world quickly learns that it is not wanted and is ready enough to pass by on the other side, as it would avoid a cemetery.

Many older men and women grow increasingly attractive to youth as they grow older, for they value and trust youth and become the friends of the younger generation.

When one reads a book like that by Principal Alfred Stearns—"The Challenge of Youth"—he realizes how valuable it is to see in the growing generation qualities of worth and stability. He unconsciously reads between the lines that the author is a friend of boys.

New friendships may be acquired and cemented daily. If a man is to have friends, we read, "he must show himself friendly." Obvious concern to make friends is not required. The secret of winning them is an attitude of good will and kindness toward all.

How little we know of the persons about us! Their very mannerisms often prejudice and antagonize. Yet if we could get beneath the surface of their lives and become acquainted with the real selves beneath, we would often find rare and noble personalities.

The power to make new friends will keep the advancing life from monotony and selfishness and insure a happy old age if many years are allotted to us.

What a delight some elderly people are! Every one seems to love them and loves to be with them. They never seem crabbed or critical, but are con-

stantly cheerful, sympathetic and interested. Their very faces smile them into companionship and their fine inner selves make new friends.

Incapacity in making new friends is often the result of careless speech or thoughtless bluntness of expression. There comes to my mind one who is past middle life, who is capable and respected, whose work is excellent and praiseworthy, but who never seems to get on well for any length of time with new people. Influence wanes after a short time and new relationships become necessary. The whole trouble is that with him adaptability has never been acquired. A blunt form of speech, always honest and truthful but unfeeling and tactless, seems his unchangeable characteristic. Instead of his making friends, opposition is soon kindled. Such men are unable to understand why life seems so fickle and undependable. They fail to look at the reflection of themselves in life's mirror for the cause, and imagine that "the world is against them."

What a delight friendship is! A man is never poor who has friends. The more he has the richer he is. Compare the possession of money and things with the acquisition of many friends. To go

through life being loved and valued is the height of blessing and yields contentment and happiness now and guarantees them for the future.

We were calling on an aged saint of God in far-away China. She had celebrated her fiftieth anniversary on the field as a missionary. The disabilities of age were not controlling, for she lived above them. She was honored and loved by all who knew her, and she was aware of it. After a brief prayer with her she said:

"What a joy Christian friendships are! We can take them with us into the unseen world. They are eternal!"

We were new friends to her, but had entered into her home of eternal friendships.

Life is short and selfish unless friendships lengthen and enrich it. Man never grows too old to make new friends. Possessing them, every day is a new beginning; every hour may be filled with joy. When age mingles with youth through true friendship, white hair becomes silver and youth wins a laurel crown of blessing.

VALUING THE COMMONPLACE

WE WERE looking out over Manila bay, facing the western sky at the evening hour. The sunset was glorious beyond description. As far as the eye could scan, the red and golden glow reached up into the heavens, blending light and brilliant coloring in superb harmony. Behind us bands were playing and thousands were thronging into Wallace field, where the annual carnival was opening.

As we turned and looked upon the dazzling and fascinating array of electric lights—red, white and blue, streaming from dome and turret—it seemed a very fairyland of light, rivalling the theater street in Denver or the great white way in New York.

Happy and care-free, the crowd surged in through the gate to the carnival; a few stood to look at the glorious western sky. The sunsets would recur evening after evening, and one could see them any time, but the carnival would only last a few days! Why take time to gaze at the sunset?

A friend touched me on the arm and asked, "What do you think of it all?"

"It suggests a comparison between the work of God and of man," I replied; "the one is majestic

and sublime; the other brilliant and fascinating."

The finest gifts of God, after all, are the great commonplaces which are all about us most of the time. No work of man can equal or rival the intricate and incomparable creations of nature. What photograph or painting can portray the overpowering majesty of great mountains, or the vast immensity and power of the ocean and its ceaseless tides and billows? No delicate lace ever made can equal in beauty or fineness the spider's web of a night's creation, or the noiseless snowflake as it falls on the sleeve of one's coat. Nature has no rival amid the works and words of man.

The stars in their myriad number and immeasurable distances constantly give new definitions of infinity, and call anew to our minds the thought of eternal realities. And these may be seen and appreciated without money or price by any one who will stop to look and think.

The air we breathe; the water we drink; the light we use; the sleep which refreshes; the works that strengthen; the children who love us—all these are the constant and common gifts of life all about us and need but to be appropriated.

What greater joy is there in life than friendship? And that is open and free to all who will show themselves unselfish and friendly! What inspiration surpasses that of the soul's vision? And that is ever before the one who will see, read, think and pray! What is the secret of happiness, if not in the daily service which lives and loves to work for others?

Beauty of life is not gained in striving for it, but it is all about us. "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow—they toil not neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

The world seems crazed to find the strange, the unnatural, the irregular, that it may be amused and entertained; while all about us are the greatest gifts of all which may be our possessions by the mere acceptance of them at our hand.

What is sweeter and more blessed than a quiet Christian home and the influence of it? Why, then, long for something else? What means more than brotherhood, fatherhood, motherhood, friendship? And these are with us and our very own if we will value them.

The common tasks of life are the finest things

on earth to do. The common duties well performed make the sweetest and finest characters. The cultivation of hothouse flowers has not added to the perfume or color of the wild flowers. No created fragrance has yet surpassed that of the modest arbutus. All about us heaven exists. As the Saviour said, "The kingdom of heaven is in your midst," heaven lives in life's commonplaces. When we realize this we have found the real valuation of life.

THE JOY OF GIVING

IT WAS A birthday morning, and a man slipped a tiny \$2.50 gold piece into the hand of his friend. . . . The simple incident caused the recipient to say, "Once I had a \$20 gold piece which had been given to me and I was keeping it for something I really wanted; but we were just off Yokohama when the awful earthquake and fire occurred, and it was the joy of my life to be able to use that gold piece to help those suffering thousands."

Her face lit up as she told the story, and the incident brought to mind afresh the joy and delight of giving. Those who have never felt this joy

have something in store if they will give themselves a chance to experience real happiness by giving ungrudgingly.

Another life comes to my memory. She had passed through hard and lonely sorrow, but instead of allowing it to crush and embitter her she overcame it by giving herself and her money to those in need. She shared her home, she divided everything with others day after day and year after year, and her life not only shut out gloom but it became radiant and beautiful.

Have you ever seen a selfish self-centered child possess a happy disposition, or develop a winsome personality? The giving away of things leads mankind to place the emphasis on spiritual instead of upon material values.

Accumulations load and burden life, but the giving of things and the passing of possessions on to others lightens life and fosters good will, and increases friends and the capacity for friendship.

On Sunday morning in the beginners' department of one of our Sunday schools the teacher was gratified to have a little lad hand her a \$10 gold piece as his birthday offering. On being ques-

tioned as to this generous gift the boy said, "Well, my father asked me this morning what I wanted most for my birthday present, and I told him I wanted \$10 so you could buy one of those goats the missionary lady told us about."

It seems that the wife of a doctor from northern Siam, one of our ablest missionaries, had talked to the children a month or two before and had told them that \$10 would buy another goat to supply the poor babies in that far-away field with nutritious goat's milk.

The boy had gained his vision, and it was apparent in his wishes when he had the chance to choose whatever birthday gift he wanted.

That boy will take happiness with him through life. He will not develop wrinkles on his forehead before he is twenty. It needs no prophet to foretell that he will be useful, popular and cheerful through school, college and life. He has already learned the joy of giving.

The healthiest, happiest Christianity in the world is the joyful-giving Christianity. It was the Saviour's meaning of the "second mile" and the added coat. Such lives never lack friends and never grow old. They are the joy of the whole earth for they

have learned to "brighten the corner where they are."

ETERNAL VIGILANCE

RECENTLY there appeared in one of our magazines for moral reform a rather discouraging article. The article in substance declared it to be a dire criticism on human nature that after such a successful moral campaign as one conducted a few years ago it was necessary to go at it all over again and reconstruct from the ground up. The writer closed the article by saying, "Moral reform should be of such a type that it would recreate itself in every advancing generation and reincarnate its standard in permanent righteous government and stability of life." The trouble with the writer was this: He failed to realize that eternal vigilance is necessary, not only in organized society but with every human individual.

The sins of society are only a composite photograph of the sins of individuals, and those who judge human nature aright fully appreciate that eternal vigilance is necessary in every human life if there is to be victory over wrong, and if sin is to be avoided.

One of the old gospel hymns used to read:

"Every day, every hour, let me feel thy cleansing power."

A more modern hymn, reads:

"Moment by moment I'm kept by his love."

The ordinary human life may not be as duplex as Stevenson revealed in his "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Yet the element of contest within the individual is not unique but universal in all mankind. The will to do right is present but the desire to do wrong is even more present. Paul portrayed this most clearly in Romans, chapters 7 and 8:

"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." It is not strange that he cried out in extreme anguish: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

His question is the world's question, and the only answer is his: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Eternal vigilance is necessary if we are to over-

come the inclinations of the flesh and the sinful desires of the human heart.

Premeditated evil exists but has not such spontaneity or controlling force as the impulsive, unexpected inclination of the heart which arises from the least suggestion, or from causes of which one may be unconscious.

This necessity of eternal vigilance is not limited to the great moral contests of life. It is a law of necessity in all details of character, in all the controlling factors of existence. A slovenly irregularity means ready access for the decomposing and destructive elements which attack character just as the lifeless body is attacked.

Cleanliness, order, neatness—all require the everlasting habit of persistence. Day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, both the soul and the body must be on guard. Any housewife will tell you that a room “dusted” perfectly and put in prime order will begin again to accumulate dust before the service rendered is completed.

This eternal vigilance has much to do with personal happiness. Many a home would lose much of its irritation and many, many a married couple

would never be disturbed by "incompatibility" if eternal vigilance had reigned from the beginning.

Christian character is not only evidenced in loyalty to scriptural and doctrinal truths, and in church attendance, but is influenced even by good housekeeping and the care of little things. The making and preservation of a home which must include the proper training of children require eternal vigilance. The seemingly simple problem of the stage in his life when it is a struggle to get Willie to keep his hands clean has a bearing on the lad's whole life. Are you glad your parents made you keep clean, or do you wish you had had the sort that considered it "too much trouble to keep after the children"?

A hundred virtues may be obscured by a simple prominent vice that can be traced back to neglectful habits. With self-respecting people, dishes have to be washed at least three times a day; desks put in order; windows washed and floors swept—not merely when impulse moves the individual to action, but constantly, incessantly, with eternal vigilance.

The ceaseless beating of the waves upon the shore; the regularity and uniformity of the incom-

ing and outgoing tide; the never-failing north star with its sure pointers; the rising and setting sun—all point to this great law which makes nature constant and upon which the history of the ages has built its sure and permanent calendar.

The restless and sometimes brilliant service of quick inspiration can never be a substitute for the painstaking faithfulness of those who are eternally vigilant. Nothing is more demanded in our age than this: A return to normal faithfulness, a dependence upon sure and fixed habits, a constancy in the virtue of doing little things always as they should be done, and a regulation of life by the doing of fixed duties with the surety and conscientious exactness of the tick of a reliable watch.

Faithfulness means more than brilliancy; exact obedience more than impulsive resolve. Eternal vigilance is the law of God revealing divine character in its precise and dependable faithfulness.

“KEEP MOVING”

WE WERE going from the train to the ferry! Hundreds of travelers, everyone walking briskly. No, not all. One big, self-important man was standing still, his grip near him and his um-

brella under his arm, country fashion. Hence he was in trouble and sputtering. Someone had fallen over his grip. Another had run into his umbrella. Someone else had kicked his grip away from him, and as he reached for it, off went his hat. He was just about to make the air blue when a sensible man shouted out a bit of advice in the simple phrase, "Why don't you move on?" The man, no doubt, was all right, and quite a decent fellow, but he had not learned to "keep moving." It is not necessary to rush, in metropolitan ferryboat style; we are not urging reckless speed, but simply *motion*.

The man who stands still is bound to get into trouble. He may mean well. The crowd, however, will not stop to ask his meaning, but will walk on him instead. Common sense should show him that safety lies in advancing. If he keeps moving no one will run into him. The crowd adjusts the progress to the motion.

Of course, *direction* has something to do with it. Our big, stand-still friend suddenly takes it into his head to follow the advice of the sensible man and "move on," but he remembers that he left a book in the train, and so, grip and umbrella in hand, faces the crowd. He starts off with hurry

and worry. The train may pull out, the book may be appropriated by another. A few steps, and he collides with a small boy looking the other way. The boy laughs; he doesn't. Then he catches his umbrella tip in a crack and something snaps. He jerks it from the crack, only to rap the head of a man carrying bundles. Verbal friction results, and the opposite of love looks. As he boards the car a trainhand, crossing from another car, almost knocks him down. Forgetting the book in his anger, he is told to hustle, as the train is about to back out of the station. Finally giving up his hunt as the train begins to back he nearly breaks his neck as he jumps from the train the wrong way. He has been moving, but moving backward. It takes our friend an hour or two to regain his temper, if he succeeds at all in doing so. He probably leaves the city with the impression that it is the most heartless and uncivil place on earth. All because he doesn't know enough to *keep moving in the right direction*.

"Keep moving" is kith and kin to "Get busy," "Step lively," and that old military command, "Forward, march!"

Some whole families live happily and *accomplish things*. They never get in the way of others, for

they have the right of way. They always have friends, for the world loves enterprise and motive power. They are always happy, for sunlight itself "keeps moving." Men who keep moving have learned that, although a good start is of value, the "ready, set, go!" is not enough, and that every muscle and every sinew must be alert and active until the tape is crossed.

OVERWORKING THE LUNCH HOUR

IN MANY of our cities the lunch hour is no longer a social pleasure nor a time of rest or refreshment; for, in many instances it has developed into an added hour of special business. So many organizations and committees demand thought and time, and the noon meal is such a convenient time that it has gained great demand. Seldom does it have the informal and delightful fellowship it once possessed.

This condition arrests attention and is of sufficient importance to be considered carefully. The modern custom has become a habit, with its advantages as well as its disadvantages.

I was interested recently to note that this same

custom has found its way into the enterprising cities of the orient.

The lunch hour—"tiffin" as they call it—is very frequently used thus. In taking "tiffin" at the splendid new American Club in Shanghai I noted many groups at tables about us who were apparently there with regular business to attend to, and in more than one instance they were accompanied by secretaries with notebooks in hand.

I remarked that the American habit apparently had reached China. "Yes," was the reply, "some of us do not rest any more at the noon hour but work harder than ever. But," he added, "it's a different kind of work after all and it helps out in these busy lives of ours."

There is no doubt the custom is quite general, and it is well to consider how far it should go and where and how its good features may be kept and the injurious ones eliminated.

It has not been an exception, I am sure, for some to have two or three engagements for luncheon on the same day, and some of these have been meetings set without consultation and which cause, of necessity, a choice as to their relative importance.

This is always embarrassing and at times confusing and difficult. It is frequently obviated by attending two or more hurriedly and without satisfactory result.

We should consider in this connection that a busy and thoughtful man who gets to his office or work at a comparatively early hour needs a complete "let-up" and short rest in the middle of the day, if he is to apply himself equally and with strength during the afternoon.

Whether he eats or not, the lunch hour should be recreation and restful. It is not the time to face heavy responsibilities nor solve important questions. There will be exceptions, but no great bank would think of meeting regularly for the transaction of its business at the noon hour. Work of such importance must have first and best consideration.

Many organizations recognizing this fact do not begin serious discussions until ample time has been given for the meal and for social conversation.

The mere idling of an hour or two at noon for luncheon is not the question, but the element of good fellowship engendered among friends as they sit together at the table has no small degree of

merit. Men need to know one another outside of the tasks and duties of life and gain mutual confidence and enhance friendly good will.

I have in mind two elderly gentlemen of one city—one an honored physician and the other a business man—who for over forty years took lunch together at a little “inn” around the corner every Thursday. Both now are gone, but in lunching with one of them shortly after his friend had died, he said, “It has been and is one of the happiest memories of my life.”

Let us continue our noon lunches for the “transaction of special business”—philanthropic, religious, social—but let us curb this growing appetite for expedition and take some of the time and some days in the week to get acquainted and to warm the soul of friendship, as one can when one talks and eats with a friend “over the tea cups,” as one of our American poets puts it.

The tabletalk of Christ affords a most interesting topic along this line of thought.

ANTICIPATION AND MEMORY

ANTICIPATION and Memory—how little we know of these friends of happiness. In the busy life of every day; the fascinating energy of competition; the whirl of machinery; the rapid conversation of commerce; the magnetic attraction of wealth-getting, the days rush past, the years roll up, and we have had no time to look forward, no time to look back. We leave Anticipation to youthful castle-builders in the primary class of life; we leave Memory to old men and old women.

This is a sad error. No joy is more invigorating and inspiring than that which comes through Anticipation. Do you not remember the thrill of boyhood when counting the days to Christmas, or to the coming birthday? Can we not see this same manifestation in animal nature as the horse steps off with more rapid pace as he turns toward home; or the dog, sunning himself on the porch, as he heeds the distant rumble of the approaching meat cart?

Ideals are also largely the children of Anticipation. The boy musician who listens to the strains of that majestic organ in Westminster Abbey, as the melody seems to twine and intertwine amid those splendid arches, goes to his finger exercises

with a new life and hope. In his eye there is a distant expansion; it is Anticipation. He sees himself master of that great organ some time. His ideal is strengthened by that day-dream. Anticipation makes real his ideal. The true ideal is always before faithful Anticipation.

The verb, "to anticipate," has sometimes been wronged in common usage. We have been told "not to anticipate reward, but to win it." There we have robbed the word of much of its proper power. The verb may have grown to a legitimate use in this definition, but not the noun. Anticipation must not be lowered to such meaning. It is like placing the lens of the Yerkes telescope upon a large amateur camera to thus limit this noble word.

The gift of Anticipation is not only a wonderful quality, it is also a light-giving grace. Why then do we fail to enjoy this grace more? Because we are too busy with material cares. We feel that we cannot anticipate because we have to act. Theory we claim must give place to practicality.

Thus we lose this blessing, and wonder why others find time to be so happy, and how they always seem cheerful as to the future.

The trouble is with our narrowed vision. Day-

dreaming we all despise. But Anticipation is not day-dreaming. It has just the opposite effect. It puts vitality into the blood, instead of clodding it. Enervation never grows out of an active Anticipation; it is rather the result of a mind that is inactive. The Apostle Paul knew the grace of Anticipation, and he had learned in whatsoever state he was in to be content. Happiness never forsook him. The "joy of the Lord" was always his strength. A Philippian jail, with all its groanings and darkness, did not discourage him. He joined Silas in a duet of praise and faith which resulted in liberty and freedom. No dungeon could drive from his mind the forethought he wrote to others: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are before, I press toward the mark of God's high calling."

This brings us to our companion thought, Memory. Paul implied in these words just quoted that he forgot the past in order that he might Anticipate. Is this the true interpretation? We think not; for some time later this same man said: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." He certainly remembered the good of the past—the victories, the

associations, so dear to his best self. His frequent repetition of his strange experience on the Damascus road shows how much memory cheered him.

Fuller defined the memory as "the treasure-house of the mind wherein the monuments thereof are kept and preserved." What a wealth of joy there is in a varied and useful life-memory. How the old scenes come back to us. Memory lifts an umbrella over every rainy day. It opens a crack in every prison wall. It is as Basil wrote: "The cabinet of imagination, the treasure-house of reason, the register of conscience, and the council-chamber of thought."

Neither Anticipation nor Memory should rob the demands of active enthusiasm in life. This is not our aim, but we do seek for more thoughtful moments with these most delightful life-guests. A life free from sentiment and imagination is a hard life to live. Anticipation and Memory add to healthful sentiment and imagination. We plead for proper respect and time for both. Without them, life is drudgery; with them, life is a gallery of beauty and happiness.

"ALL THINGS CONSIDERED"

SNAP JUDGMENT has never been uncommon and will always be used by the shortsighted. Few people seem able to see the thing through, to see from both sides, to judge wisely. Many conditions, influences, changes, motives and desires enter into almost every question. Many different temperaments and personalities must be taken into account; so it is not remarkable that many of us are misjudged and that we misjudge others.

All of us are liable to allow our judgment to be influenced by our own inclination and wish. People usually try to do what they really want to do. Though there may be a high moral purpose and a lofty ideal back in the recesses of our minds and hearts, the natural impulse of life is too strong to call it forth and it lies latent.

It is also true that frequently we do not take sufficient time to consider all sides of a question. Haste, hurry, speed—all somehow are wrought into the very fabric of our age and we think we must answer questions and decide issues immediately.

The calm, deliberate poise of patient judgment

seems to be lacking everywhere. Though the world demands a positive or negative immediate answer, it has no right to make such demand. The terms, "Let me think it over," "I will tell you later," "I will give the matter thought," are not popular today and have been estimated unjustly by many as revealing an uncertain or weak nature. To the contrary, they are terms which suggest qualities of strength and leadership.

A good deal of time is consumed by making up for past errors and doing over again that which should have been done right the first time. This demand for immediacy and haste is largely responsible for such mistakes. If we would think the things through, consider all sides of the question, meditate before we determine, we would escape constant error and disappointment. This pertains to almost every phase of life, whether entering a new business or falling in love.

The times demand just such characteristic thoughtfulness. The results of the folly of thoughtless impulses are seen everywhere. Architecture would be along better lines; books better written; editorials more constructive; sermons

more inspiring and homes better established and regulated, if we took into account the "all things considered" of life.

"Think it through" is a good motto to put on your wall. It is just as valuable as "Do it now," for the man of power is after all the man of poise and the man of influence—the man whose judgment is the result of brain as well as heart.

It does not mean, however, that we are to become procrastinators and put off decisions which should be made without undue delay. There is a great difference between determining the positive right and wrong of a thing, and the wisdom of decision in matters of practical method. To say a man is deliberate, thoughtful, conscientious, considerate, is to stamp his character with approval and place his name among the ranks of the wise. To say he is impulsive, inconsiderate, reckless, thoughtless, erases his name from such a list.

A great many decisions would be reversed if we could think things through and say, "All things considered, I conclude as follows."

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

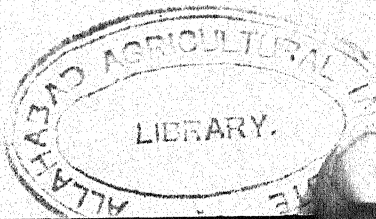
ONE OF the signs of physical decrepitude and the creeping on of old age is a tendency to look askance at every new enterprise. In youth, the Jack and Jill period, we carried the pail of water for the purpose of cleansing or drinking rather than to moisten a wet blanket. Now those of us who are using wet blankets on new enterprises betray that they no longer belong to the Jack and Jill age, but unconsciously are becoming disposed to suppress the fires of ardor. The "shelf" awaits them.

Just as long as the world has problems and as the church is aggressive, there will be new duties to perform, new efforts to make and new contrivances to invent. When enthusiasm dies promotion ceases, and novelty will be simply a matter of historic interest. As long as there is life, energy and hope in the world there will be new people, new methods, new schemes and new problems everywhere. Promoters are necessary as well as architects and contractors, just as blueprints and specifications are necessary as well as steel structure, brick, stone and mortar. All developers are not promoters, we are grateful to say, just as all

builders are not architects. But encouragement and appreciation must be given to those who promote aright. The new will not necessarily discredit the old, nor take its place, but may add greatly to its value and bring it up to date.

What man would think of wearing the same kind of hat he wore when he was in college—the old-fashioned headgear of those days causes a laugh whenever one looks at an old college photograph. When one studies the pictures of the hats of women of that period even more merriment takes place, and at that time no doubt the dress of twenty years before seemed equally odd.

As I write I am looking upon an engraving of John Knox thundering his eloquence before the queen, her courtiers and that royal assembly. There seems to be nothing incongruous in the scene so far as costumes and dress are concerned, but when we compare these costumes with the present-day attire, even of royalty, we cannot but be amused. Styles, costumes, conventionalities change with the years. We must adjust ourselves to the new if we are to live in sympathy with younger life. If we are to keep from growing old we must not parallel changing conditions with the



lowering of moral standards, for they do not necessarily correspond. One may be good, true, pure, righteous, loyal to the best and still appreciate the altering and new conditions of his oncoming day.

Jesus Christ himself said, "Behold, I make all things new," and the newness of life in him is the need of us all.

There is a close relation in our thought to Paul's words, "Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before"; in other words, the forward look is the manifestation of life, growth and hope. An attitude of criticism of the new usually suggests a "spent ball."

KEEPING SWEET

THE RELIGION of Jesus Christ is the religion of love, joy and peace. Its Founder chose men for his apostles from differing ranks of life and with varied temperaments. Around a common Lord and Master they lived, worked and loved. His spirit controlled their hearts and harmonized their natures. When human strife led toward bitterness and open controversy his word, deed and spirit dispelled the frown and replaced it with a

smile. Nearness to Christ meant the restoration of good feeling and appreciation one of another. His admonition was "Love one another."

This vivid portrayal of his nature is seen in the writings of those who learned his nature. "If ye love not your brother whom ye have seen, how can ye love God whom ye have not seen?"

The church which he founded with his own blood must "keep sweet" if Christ is to win the world. "All bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil-speaking, must be put away with all malice."

The apostles differed, and earnest men will always differ; but interpretation, definition, expression, must have liberty if Christian men are to "adorn the doctrine of God."

"I agree fully with everything that he believes and confesses," wrote an earnest pastor, "but the spirit of personal bitterness, even apparent hatred, he evidences in his writings, his unreasonable and unwarranted thrusts of unkindness and distrust, fill me with dismay and resentment.

"I am driven to my knees to keep my soul sweet, but I will not cease to love him for Christ's sake, even if I cannot read his writings."

Here is an example of a Christian spirit "keeping sweet" and honoring Christ.

The Saviour was frank and fearless in his open denunciation of the hypocrite and insincere, but he bore lovingly with earnest followers who differed.

The church is filled today with many contrary opinions and statements. But we must remember that the same mountain range has differing outlines from even near-by viewpoints.

Majesty, beauty, reality, endure the test of all these standing grounds. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, has been and will be honored, beloved, glorified by men whose temperament, natures and visions differ greatly, but all may honor, love and glorify him together if they are inspired by him instead of perturbed by disagreement.

When Peter's impulsive suggestion of temporary abode for Deity and human leaders had been silenced by the sacred voice and command, "Hear ye him," they said, "Jesus only."

When our own revered Lincoln was sneered at and hated by strong opponents, even in his very cabinet, his strength of soul and greatness of char-

acter were seen and felt in the serenity and saintliness of his good nature; when men snarled and raved he "kept sweet"; "with malice toward none" he won a war and turned hatred into love.

If ever we needed to "keep sweet," it is now.

When the spirit of Christ is seen and known, men trust and love one another.

Recently a noble Christian woman of very definite and pronounced opinions and faith was approached by several angry friends who termed her views narrow and absurd. Her placid but strong face gave no resentment nor anxiety.

"Well," she replied, "I love you all, and perhaps I am narrow and queer. I often wish I could get the viewpoint of my friends a little better. Your friendship makes me hopeful that I may."

After drinking a cup of tea together they parted. As her friends left her one said to the other: "What a queen she is, anyway! I'd like to be her kind of Christian. She makes me live and pray better. My daughter adores her."

This Christlike leader in society loves Christ, believes in humanity, trusts her differing fellow Christians, and "keeps sweet."

She is not young, but her very years add to her grace and loveliness. "With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation." The Spirit of Christ means "keeping sweet."

SPRING JOYS

SPRING means a thrill to every one, young and old, whose human sensibilities are not paralyzed. The sight of a pussy willow or a tiny crocus unconsciously lifts the corners of the mouth upward. The tulip and jonquil cause a lighter step, and the sun-absorbing dandelion and the lilac with its reflective color of the evening sky call children to the fresh green lawns, and the aged to the refreshing mildness of outdoors.

Yes, spring is a life-giver and the redeemer of joy and delight. But, do we sufficiently appropriate its many blessings? It is one thing to accept its glad return, but another to incarnate its spirit.

The winter has been long and binding. Its cold and ice have frozen up the old earth and incased its life. Now spring has broken from bondage

and in the robin's early note and the verdure of the fields we behold life's resurrection.

If we do not take this new life into our very souls, it will soon become commonplace and lose all the vitality of its meaning.

To possess the spring, we must do more than accept it; we must appropriate it. It is not enough to let it come—to tear the old month from the calendar. We must let the newness of life become a very part of our existence. To enjoy the spring, we must appropriate it.

Air outside the lungs is not enough; we must take long breaths of it into the lungs. Sunshine without is of little use if life's blinds are shut and life's curtains are drawn. The fragrance of flowers cannot penetrate rooms hermetically sealed. Stars cannot glisten and twinkle, no matter how clear the night, if eyes which look upwards are closed or blind.

There are many things which close the eyes or dim their vision. Among these anxiety and worry stand first. Everyday religion uses Paul's verse, "Be anxious for nothing." It also "casts all its care upon Him for He careth."

A fretful, restless disposition will also dim the

eyes so that spring joy cannot be seen. The Scripture says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee"; also, "Great peace have they that love thy law."

Spring may come and dissolve into the heat and drought of summer without a thrill of joy to those whose lives do not appropriate its freshness and beauty.

Nothing in all the realm of man's creations can compare with the free gifts and blessings of the spring. These belong to man at the simple cost of his acceptance. The soul that values them aright has an everyday religion as free and boundless as the love of God.

A little effort will take you into the park or out into the vigorous untainted air of the early morning. An evening stroll will yield the undefinable sensation of calm reserve and untried powers. Fragrance, song, beauty, growth, life, color, joy are present to the appropriator of the spring.

Little children love the unconscious impulse of returning life and vigor. Life's sorrows disappear and new hopes and purposes arise. The hills and valleys "clap their hands." The desert starts "to blossom as the rose." The trout dart in the stream.

The lark soars into the sky. The soul of all nature is bright and beautiful, and all is freely the gift of man if he appropriates with heart, ear, hand and soul.

TELEPHONE COURTESY

“HELLO! Is that Central?” “Yes.” “Give me Main 0064.” “Yes.” “Busy? Well, why are they busy?” (A moment later:) “Will you give me Main 0064? Well, why are they still busy? What kind of a phone is this, anyhow? And then, to the man in his office, the man phoning says: “This telephone is useless, and so is every operator they have in the place!” It happened that his friend had a little niece, who is in the telephone exchange, and he knew her side of the story, and he also was man enough to stand up for her when she was not around. He knew that it was a dangerous time to speak to his friend, and that pyrotechnics might result, but as he was in the mood for a little fun, he said: “Well, I don’t know. I would rather have almost any position in the world than that of a telephone girl. They have to take impatience, thoughtlessness and blame from people on the end of a thousand wires. It is enough to ruin the disposition of any human being. If you

want to know whose fault it is I would advise you to go and look in the glass."

Well, the pyrotechnics did not result, because his friend was a sensible man, who said: "I believe you are right. I was in fault. It was not the girl's fault that the line was in use."

After all, it is a great deal easier to be courteous when you are talking to some one face to face than when you are miles away over a telephone wire, but the true gentleman or lady does not need propinquity to show character.

Two or three telephone girls were once talking together as a lady passed. "My," said one of them, "I would give anything to know that lady." "Why? Who is she?" "Well, I don't know much about her, except that she is Lawyer So-and-So's wife; but I do know that whenever she speaks over the phone she is as gentle and kind as if she were in her own drawing room."

A great many people instantly criticize the poor service, wretched attention, and use all kinds of general slurs simply because they themselves are thoughtless, ill-tempered and impatient. Would it not be worth while to think a moment what you could do in modern methods of quick dispatch if it were not for the telephone? Think of the jour-

neys saved, of the business facilitated, of the quick information returned. Of course, there are annoyances, especially the negligent, slothful individual who rings you up in a busy moment to ask you how to spell a word, or what its meaning is, instead of looking in Webster's Unabridged. In such a case, show fire if you like, when you answer him, but the next time you call up Central remember that your natural voice is gentle.

The man or woman who knows how to be a gentleman or lady over the telephone has pretty well discovered the secret of happy life, which is summed up in these two little words, "Keep sweet!"

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

THE CYNIC swears when he hears of New Year resolutions, the careless laugh, and the philosopher takes them for granted and goes on as he has before. Nevertheless, thoughtful and earnest people, young and old, will make them just the same, and start anew to make good. No one who has ever started afresh on New Year's day with hopeful and determined resolve has failed to be the better for it, even if he has failed in his effort.

Is it not worth while, however, to consider a

little more definitely the causes of failure and try to do better as a result of the conclusions gained?

New Year resolutions do not and cannot hold out by merely starting with enthusiasm. They must be backed by determination and persistency.

Do we not sometimes take in too far a view, or aim at a target with too long range? Life's problems, temptations and dangers cannot all be met by a general program. The year is made up of 365 or 366 days. Just as "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," so sufficient unto the day must be the strife thereof.

If we would start the New Year on a daily instead of an annual basis we might succeed better.

"Every day is a new beginning."

To live day by day is the only way to live year by year.

The unit is the day. The day is the integer with which we must reckon in moral mathematical problems.

To live the first day aright is the likeliest guarantee of following the second day without failure. The fight for right cannot be waged too far ahead; neither can the whole front win without individual and far-reaching courage and persistency.

And even the day will be narrowed in time, for temptation assails in a moment, in a mere second of time.

If a man starts out his day with a determination to conquer for that one day, he will find he must be on guard every moment. The alertness of evil has always been known to the moral fighter. This is the meaning of the scriptural advice, "watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

Character is never attained merely by making out an annual moral budget; nor can it be attained by the ledger method only! It must keep its day book.

Again, we fail because we are liable to think that our failure spoils the year's record. Becoming discouraged, we yield to indifference, and let the year go by default.

Athletes and tumblers tell us that they acquire skill by falls and failures. Walking itself is a continual regaining of our equilibrium when we start to fall.

A successful trainer will make the athlete work the harder when he fails.

New Year resolves must include the determina-

tion, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." Then discouragement will be conquered and persistence in well doing will win out.

New Year resolutions will grow into new day resolutions, and they in turn with hourly, momentary guarding and care, and moment by moment, will mark moral time as a watch ticks the seconds away.

TRAFFIC CHRISTIANITY

HUMAN NATURE evidences its quality in the commonplace. Surface cars, elevated roads and busses reveal character as well as temperament. They seldom convey pleasure seekers; their patrons are toilers, followers of stern duty. They are not considered ends in themselves, but means to an end. Their passengers ride not in order to ride, but to get somewhere. Hence little thought is given to the journey. Personal and immediate convenience control.

Entrance of woman into a great variety of occupations has scratched gallantry from the vocabulary of en route etiquette. The only thought is to arrive as quickly as possible. Time is to be passed with half-impatient endurance rather than used.

Advertisements, newspapers, mind-wandering and drowsiness fill in.

Frequently congestion of traffic or delay of any sort prompts wrinkled foreheads, complaints, ill-natured expressions. A careless jostler, an awkward slipper, or a seat-monopolizer (usually termed a cloven-hoof) provokes a profane look or the vocal expression. Close air and crowded bodies add to discomfort. And yet as a whole the traveling throng is good-natured and cheerful. The sullen conductor or cross passenger is an exception. Some one usually turns a mishap into a joke, or a threatened tragedy into comedy.

The average daily strap-hanger is not a grumbler nor grouch, but a cheerful sort of being with a reserve of good will.

The casual observer en route on our city thoroughfares discovers that courtesy and kindness are not extinct.

Of course the bore and the bully are discoverable. The uncultured and shameless likewise pay their fares. And one of the penalties of democracy will ever be to endure patiently the perpetual-motion gum-chewer, the traveling lunch-muncher and the man who bites his nails or picks his teeth pub-

licly. Do not frown at him even though you pity his wife, but demonstrate piety by patience. He may have worthy—but unseen—virtues.

Look at it all another way. Life en route is filled with opportunities to evidence the Christian spirit and brighten the day for others. Cheerfulness is as contagious as distemper; in fact, more so. A merry heart is better than a sunbeam. Humor will help out almost any distressing situation if given half a chance. The man who can enjoy personal and silent humor as well as the spoken word will evade trouble and keep sweet. One cannot imagine a David Harum ruffled.

No matter how exasperating a fellow traveler may be, one can really take comfort in the fact that the journey is a short one at best, and that when it is ended the annoyance will end with it.

Then, frequently sympathy or knowledge will lessen or eliminate your uneasiness. The eye that stares at you so keenly may be glass. The unsteady jostler may be faint or ill. The man who does not answer you may be deaf. That sad face may be returning from the graveside, or the anxious nervous seatmate may be hurrying to the

deathbed of a mother. That fretful, crying child may be motherless and ill.

True religion shows its genuineness amid trying and adverse surroundings. Amid the ordinary is the place to exhibit the extraordinary. Christ is powerful to heal and cheer when amongst the multitudes. Virtue still goes out of him when the hem of his garment is touched.

Selfish religion still voices those words of his wearied apostles in saying of the multitudes: "Send them away," but Jesus says, "Give ye them to eat."

"Good morning," said a street-car conductor as he made change for a middle-aged clerk. "I was looking for you at this corner." The cheerful remark warmed every one entering. After he had gone on into the car the conductor said to a group on the platform: "That man is one in a thousand. I look for him every day. He's a friend to every working man."

How simple and easy and natural it all is. Religion "en route" is not professionalized piety but just living Christianity in the ordinary all the time.

TRIUMPHING OVER LONELINESS

THERE ARE a lot of lonely people in this world. Pride, to say nothing of natural reserve, shields them from discovery. Loneliness is not only oppressive but dangerous when it besets one constantly. How can it be overcome? The shock and sorrow of the death of loved ones, or of financial loss, are less likely to cause dangerous depression than a life of continued loneliness. Some state laws limit the time service in years of shepherds because of their tendency to melancholy and resulting insanity.

Loneliness is not confined to the open life, nor to life's waste places. It is equally prevalent in crowded tenement or jostling thoroughfare.

It breeds disease of mind and body and leads to discouragement and hopelessness and sometimes to suicide.

But why be lonely? A man's best friend should be himself. Where indulgence in sin and wounding of conscience have not caused regret and remorse to mingle with despair, loneliness can and should be overcome.

First, get into touch with others. Search out

others who are lonely, too, and, not telling them your own state or revealing that you know theirs, make friends with them. "Seldom will the heart be lonely if it find a lonelier still." In relieving loneliness in another your own will disappear. It will require effort, for loneliness morbidly dwelt upon intensifies itself and becomes harder and harder to shake off.

Another remedy is in good reading. Lonely folk seldom are readers. The habit of reading can be cultivated. The more one reads of wholesome literature the more one loves to read. Let characters and scenes live in your imagination. Make friends with people in books. Think of them as living characters. Feel with them, live with them.

Listless longing seldom dispels loneliness. It leads to slovenly thinking and tends to destroy self-respect. It causes frequently worthless day-dreaming and loss of interest in life. More often still, it prompts low suggestion and fosters vice. Satan finds mischief for idle minds as well as idle hands to do.

Wholesome exercise in God's out of doors will

drive away this fever of self-depreciation, for loneliness is sometimes nothing more than that.

One early evening, feeling particularly alone and depressed amid surroundings once alive with friends, I joined a group of children playing on the green and asked them if I might hold the rope as they jumped in single and double with their wonted skill.

I walked back to the hotel self-forgetful and exultant with their joy and laughter all in control.

"The Honorable Peter Stirling" (Grover Cleveland) when a lonely student in New York found the city park and the children and sparrows his constant delight and made friends with them all.

Aloofness never warms the heart nor cheers the soul. Life is a looking-glass; we get out what we put in. A lonely pain-filled face sees nothing to cheer it in life's mirroring lake, but smile reflects smile.

Faithful performance of duty also drives away loneliness and sometimes leads to new and otherwise undiscovered friends.

Meditation should not be overlooked in overcoming this foe. Think well of yourself as you meditate. Being on good terms with one's self is

worth while, and prompts self-confidence and self-reliance.

A young minister who was facing a discouraging and rather hopeless field came to my study one day and told me he had about determined to resign his charge and give up the ministry. He was lonely and almost ill. He had worked hard and with little response.

I took a walk with him, and going out to one of the suburban kennels bought him a good dog. He laughed at first and refused to take him, but seeing I was in earnest accepted the gift, although he had to change his boarding place to keep him.

That dog saved him. They became chums. The children of his parish learned to love the dog and through the dog they grew fond of his master. The dog was a friend with every one. He almost broke up a prayer meeting one evening by bouncing in on the young preacher when making his opening prayer.

But it was just the human touch they needed. "Beware of dogs" may be good advice under certain conditions, but that dog saved the young preacher's life and parish, and his loneliness was a thing of the past.

Protracted loneliness becomes a disease that must be conquered. One must look out rather than in, and if loneliness persists, there is comfort in the thought that the Master took Peter, James and John with Him to the Garden. But whenever they forgot Him, He still persevered and left for us the promise, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

A LOW TONE

MOST PEOPLE are altogether unconscious of their ordinary tone of voice used in conversation. The matter is seldom thought of, and yet perhaps nothing does more to determine the "atmosphere" of home, office or store than this very thing. A mother with a low, controlled voice is usually a good disciplinarian, much beloved by her children at the same time. A father who speaks quietly and with calm control is regarded as a gentleman and probably a master of conditions.

A clerk with a winsome, pleasing voice attracts attention, interests customers and sells goods, to say nothing of impressing those who employ or direct her.

A telephone girl with a gentle, womanly voice

is popular, helpful, and frequently finds her pay increased.

A teller or a bank clerk who talks in a pleasant manner makes friends inside and outside his bank.

The voice is in a sense a thermometer of the temperament and nervous system of its possessor. Character is frequently revealed through the tone of voice used.

One's voice influences the words, attitude and feelings of others. Irritability arouses the like in others. Trouble makers are either subtle whisperers or loud talkers. Blatancy and stupidity usually go together. "A soft answer turneth away wrath but grievous words stir up anger."

A quiet voice expresses a quiet spirit. A gentle tone suggests a gentleman or a gentlewoman. Composure and control are not shown by loud voices or excitable words.

"I could tell that man was a man of power from his very voice," is a remark sometimes heard.

Is it possible to change one's habit in this regard? For it is largely a matter of habit, after all.

The reply is self-evident. The possibility de-

pend solely upon the genuineness and determination of the questioner.

Of course, we can change for the better in this as in all other things if we are convinced of the necessity.

The change may alter our very attitude toward life itself. Especially we may find a gain in the attitude of others toward us.

Home will have a different atmosphere. Children will come to us, little-interested acquaintances may grow into friends, and formerly disagreeable surroundings become more interesting and pleasing.

People will cease to bore and begin to prove likable. You will see a smile where you never saw one before. Office helpers will gradually become human instead of mechanical. You will find business increasing, social requirements less irksome and you may hope to lower your score in golf by at least ten within six months.

When the guttural disappears from your throat the vinegar will give place to sweetness in your nature.

You may never have thought yourself responsible for another condition, so you may be sur-

prised to observe how the house will become orderly, the children better-natured and your wife more agreeable and attractive.

Life will clear and lighten when the gruff voice has become gentle, the angry utterance is no longer heard, and the individual whose loud voice has given the impression of his being constantly vexed and irritated has learned to speak gently and quietly or not to speak at all.

POSSESSION OR ACCUMULATION

ACCUMULATION is not the great worth of life. Things in themselves are liable to become burdensome. Abundance may mean added responsibility without the compensation of active use. The miser has enough and to spare, but he does not know it, and does not use it. His accumulations control him. He has no power over them, but is their unconscious slave. Thinking he is the possessor of money, he is in reality money possessed; like Prescott's river-crosser found drowned at the bottom of the stream, with his belt of gold about him, we might ask of him too, "Owned he his gold, or did his gold own him?"

Accumulators are all about us. The tendency of the day is to accumulate. Some think thus to find the quick road to social and public recognition. They think that a man may be a student by owning books; an artist by buying pictures; an athlete by building a gymnasium. Every place visited in travel must have its special material souvenir. Accumulation becomes a mania. The collector forgets all else save his opportunity to add to his accumulation. Whatever he sees is valued only on the basis of his ability to call it his own in actual ownership. Selfishness becomes unconsciously the forerunner of pride and egotism. Envy and jealousy quickly follow, and the treasures of others, instead of prompting congratulation and pleasure, rankle and torment. This insane craze grows ridiculously. Things undesirable and inappropriate become a part of the collection, the owner being ignorant of any possible incongruity. His home becomes a museum.

This tendency is also a parent of the superficial. The outside of books is valued more than the contents. To be an accumulator becomes synonymous with the mere collector. Literary estimates degenerate into comparisons of leather, binding, and editions. The tool work of a cover is

worth more than the head work of the composer.

The soul of life is left out of such a development. Men live for what they have rather than for what they really are, or may be. Life becomes an omnibus to carry material freight and unknown passengers, rather than a human being living and moving in its own chosen highways.

The soul does not enter new scenes to grow into the real living of those scenes; it dwarfs itself into material representations of those scenes in the mementos it carries away. A postal card or photograph takes the place of a new viewpoint of life. The shops and stores of Interlaken steal all the time instead of the glorious vision from the heights of Eismere or Scheinigeplatte.

Cheap jewelry or a bit of carved bone or wood robs life of its splendid inflow of new, well-circulated blood, revived by a mountain climb.

True, you will take back a few more dutiable goods in your trunk, but has your soul the greater life? Are you the accumulator of things or the possessor of life?

"The value of a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." No, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

The summer weeks are times of recreation and

vacation, but too frequently the whims of accumulation destroy the values of possession. The sea, the woods, the mountains; America, Canada, Europe, all are filled with life possessions for the man who lives to be and do, rather than to own and have.

The one accumulates; the other possesses, and instead of discontent born of a grasping eagerness to own, the soul will own itself and all it sees and loves.

DOING ERRANDS

OVER twenty years ago I had a secretary who came from a preparatory school and was fitting himself to pay his way through college. He had been chosen because of his general cleverness, but he proved himself capable in many other ways. As a stenographer and typist he excelled. His usefulness, however, seemed to have no bounds. He was always ready to do errands. Nothing which would help was beneath his dignity nor beyond his limit of willingness. If a servant was elsewhere, he waited on the door. If a baby was crying, he could win him with a smile. If the church supper lacked a waiter or even a dishwasher, he volunteered. If a printer delayed send-

ing for rush copy, he was an "errand boy." He even went to market with a basket on emergency. Once he acted as a caddy on the golf links.

I did not keep him long! He went through Yale with honors; paid his own way and graduated with money in the bank. Comparing him with another, a chap of a different sort is brought to mind. Once I found a note on the desk of the latter, slyly intended for my eye. It read: "Was I called as a secretary to run errands, to take a vest to a cleaner's, to see women to their carriages?" etc.

These are pictures of character.

Errands must be done, and big souls are not above doing little things.

A poor Scotch mother discovered later that Queen Victoria was the woman who had bought fresh milk for her little sick child at a gardener's humble cottage at Balmoral.

Phillips Brooks once tended babies near Trinity church so that a poor mother might go to church.

A friend of mine, now himself renowned, tells of his early student days when entertained in the home of a noted old college president. He heard the man quietly come into his room when he thought his guest sleeping and take his shoes downstairs to blacken them.

Christ was among us as one who served and therein lay much of his power.

Running errands may be tiresome business, but they are sometimes the key to success or failure of very important matters. One errand boy, who did his job as though he thought it important, though getting only \$3 a week, is now vice president of one of the greatest copper companies in the world.

"Who wants to do errands?" says the selfish, self-opinionated lad offered a job in his vacation: "Do them yourself." It is he who will probably be "doing it himself" all his life. Such an attitude seldom betokens qualities of leadership. It takes a good private to develop into a general.

Christ glorified this principle in his "cup of cold water." Even old, selfish Jacob got his prize by watering stock in a sort of self-chosen errand; and Isaac's servant "did errands." Moses had to become an "errand boy" for Jethro before God could send him to lead out Israel! As adopted son to the Egyptian queen, he could not learn to "do errands."

Joseph was an "errand boy" when his father sent him to find his brethren, and the

"errand boy" became the saviour of his race in Egypt.

David was an "errand boy" to the army when his young brave soul heard the blatant boast of Goliath whose head he took.

Jesus "washed his disciples' feet."

Some years ago during a church supper a newly chosen assistant pastor in a large city church was quietly asked (half in joke) to help wait on the table. With a bit of shocked surprise he quietly refused, but when he saw the pastor himself laughingly bearing a heavy tray he joined in, and from that time became a success in that parish.

Errands done joyfully result in a larger work.

Even homeless, forgotten, sin-sick wanderers find the way home by doing errands. A husk-eating, swine-feeding prodigal was brought to himself by unwholesome work, and returned to his father to gladden the old man's heart, and to paint a great picture and sing a song that has cheered the whole wide world.

AFTER FIFTY

THIS QUESTION will not even catch the eye of some men who are past the half-century mark. They just don't care. An easy chair and cigar; a chance at golf when inclined; membership at the club; plenty to eat; enough time to loaf; slippers, dressing gown, a balance in the bank and one's own room in a comfortable home satisfy them. If any one presumed to look their way and quote the old proverb, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard," nothing personal would be felt nor any resentment aroused. They just "don't care."

This type of man skips articles with such subjects as these, and either does not read at all, or, if inclined to read, ranges into the speculative or exciting. Advice, criticism or stimulating suggestion would disturb his mind and suggest the reformer or preacher.

Such a type, however, does not represent the average man.

Unless given over to indulgence, debilitated by illness or seared by vice, a man of 50 is in his prime and justifiably anticipates a score of years really worth living.

To the man with this hopeful attitude our question is worth-while. And such a question asked by a man who has not deliberately "sagged" almost answers itself. Of course, he can "brace."

Circumstances, conditions, obligations, associations, friendships, family, temperament—all must be taken into account.

Enthusiasm is often lacking, and encouragement from others cannot be expected.

At 50 a man is largely left to himself, so far as suggestion, counsel or expectation is concerned. The world isn't looking to him, but to young men. What he is, is accepted and frequently utterly without comment. He has attained or failed to attain, that's all. The limelight is turned upon his juniors. His golf record is in his son's name, just as many a man's religion is in his wife's name.

And it may be asked, Why should he brace, whether he can or not? Hasn't he won his ease? Why not "let up" on him, anyway?

Over against the tendency to "let up" note the men who are bracing at 50. They are not foolish; they don't try to play tennis or baseball instead of golf. They are always gentlemen. They dress

appropriately and neatly. They walk briskly to and from business. They keep up their reading. They take a vital interest in philanthropies, as well as business. They live young life again in their children and in their children's homes. They can still cast a fly in summer. They make new friends and still call the old crowd by their first names. They do not forget that their wives like flowers, candy and jewelry after twenty-five years of married life as well as when brides. They know what it is to take deep breaths, whistle a tune and occasionally take a dip. They feel younger than they thought possible and expect to keep on with the feeling. They shave and pray every morning and keep wrinkles off their faces during the day. They enjoy clean and constant humor without becoming wit-bores. Occasionally they write an illegible longhand note to an old friend.

They are good fellows, and they begin that good fellowship with themselves. They curb tendencies which tempt to evil just as constantly as in earlier life; and, realizing that they are forgiven sinners, keep on trying for sainthood in the distance.

Why, of course a man at 50, who wants to do it, can "brace" and find himself at 80 perhaps, as

the Irishman said, every bit as good as many a better man.

God will stay in his life. Men, women and children will honor and like him. Heaven will be nearer to him, not because he has been marching toward it, but because it is where the Great Teacher said it was—"within him."

ALONE IN THE CITY

GREAT cities are supposed to be social centers. As a matter of fact, to many persons they are the loneliest places on earth. To see throngs of people day after day, to pass thousands of human beings every day on the street without recognizing a single familiar face gives one a feeling of utter loneliness. A letter on my desk from a stranger, a lad of 18, appeals to me. It starts with the sentence: "I am writing you on a matter of personal concern, for I do not know to whom to turn. I am alone in this big city and feel it."

The lad is one, no doubt, among tens of thousands who feel the same way. But timidity, natural self-restraint, tenacious independence, pride

and perhaps discouragement prompt silence in most cases.

Thousands of young women are in the same situation. The problem is far more difficult with them. Natural reticence and pride and the dangers of misunderstanding and temptation restrain them from seeking advice or companionship.

Few youths are frank enough to admit their loneliness. Some doubtless are not conscious of it. There is always the hope that "tomorrow, just around the corner," they will find desirable friends.

Meanwhile the allurements of vice, the desire for "something different," with its tempting influence and subtle, hidden pressure toward the unconventional are testing the youth's stability.

The church as an organization seldom actually reaches this condition of need. Overaggressive measures tend to antagonize those whom it is sought to help. In many instances the church is totally indifferent to the matter, or ignorant of the condition.

"How many times," writes a young woman, "I have heaved a sigh as I have walked by your

church on the avenue, and wished I could feel free to come in and be a part of its life."

What is the trouble? The church would have welcomed her and have given her at once a place in the work. Somehow, there is a lack of contact. How can this be overcome?

The outsider misunderstands the insider; the insider forgets there is an outsider. Loneliness and sometimes bitterness result.

Wholesome, natural companionship which may develop into friendship is a necessary part of human life. Life cannot be normal and happy without it.

The city is a vast field for such development. The city church must be alive and energetic to fulfill this mission. Every resource of ingenuity and every proper form of effort must be utilized. A printed invitation, an attractive program of worship, even young people's meetings, church clubs, entertainments and an occasional church supper—these do not meet the condition. They are usually for the same old few, but do not attract or reach the very type of boy (or girl) in the neighborhood that most needs friendship. He still sighs on as the church folk gather, and they are

as far apart in spirit as the stars which make up the midnight sky. Only the personal touch can obviate this difficulty.

A friend of mine, a man of business influence, makes it a point to invite a young man of his acquaintance to his home every week, sometimes oftener—frequently Sunday afternoon for dinner. His wife also invites some young woman, although this is more difficult. She became interested in the young woman who sold her gloves in one of the large department stores, and found out that she came from the same town in an eastern state where she had once attended school. In due time she invited her to church and asked her to request the usher to seat her in her pew. A little later she invited her again with a request to dine with them after the service. Through this kindness and her natural manner, which was entirely free from patronage, she discovered a whole circle of young women who were without church attachment and any social life, and built up a splendid Sunday school class of which she was induced to become the teacher. Scores of young people have been reached as a result.

One morning a man was approached by a young bond salesman who courteously presented his case. My friend, after telling him he was not in the market but appreciated his calling, asked him if he attended church. No, he did not. My friend invited him to come to his church, and gave him his card asking him to come to his pew. He came. The man introduced him to me after the service. I found that I knew his father, a lawyer in a western city. We became friends.

That young man has told me since that this was the turning point in his life. He was lonely and unknown and had about decided that success belonged to others. He had held against strong temptations and was about to give it up. My friend's thought and kindness turned the tide and through this young convert led a dozen young fellows into touch with church life.

Neighborliness is easy in the small town. It is difficult in a great city, but vastly more needed. The church must be alive to her job. And she can do her job only through the neighborly impulses of the men and women who constitute her membership.

HOW ABOUT YOUR BOY?

SEVERAL good books have recently been written which awaken a new sense of responsibility and give a new thrill of inspiration to parenthood, especially to fathers. "The Challenge of Youth," by Alfred E. Stearns, the able principal of Phillips Andover Academy, should be read by every thoughtful dad who has a boy. He will do more for that boy because of the influence of that volume. Another book, entitled "The Job of Being a Dad," by Frank H. Cheley, stimulates the mind and quickens the fatherly instinct. In his first chapter Mr. Cheley says:

"Today boys are the hope of the world," and again, "The present problem of the American boy is the problem of the American dad, and no one else in God's clean earth can solve that problem."

There are 13,000,000 boys in America, and the fathers of these boys cannot be unmindful of their responsibility and still do their full part as citizens or as Christians.

Some years ago, it is reported, Mr. Weyerhaeuser, the famous lumberman, was asked why he always attended church with his son. He replied: "I have learned that a boy does what his

dad asks him to do until he is 14, and after that he does what his dad does."

In one of the chapters of Mr. Cheley's book he gives six reasons why it is a father's responsibility to know his boy and companionize with him:

"First—Because the boy represents the greatest unspent energy in the community.

"Second—Because boys are at the very height of susceptibility to impression.

"Third—Because the boy of today will be completely in power tomorrow.

"Fourth—Because modern society is the great battle ground of boyhood.

"Fifth—Because of the organized strength of commercialized amusements.

"Sixth—Because every boy has not only the inalienable right to be well born but also has the inalienable right to a normal all-round development—physically, mentally, socially and spiritually."

He closes the chapter by saying that he once saw on a busy executive father's desk this motto: "Every time a boy goes bad, a good man dies."

Such words from men who have been dealing with the boy problem throughout the years, and who show their vital interest in life, word and precept, cannot escape the alert mind of the true father.

Of course a boy will irritate you. A boy's questions, pranks and general life will worry a man when he is busy and when his mind is filled with other things. Human nature is such that we forget our past, except in the happy reminiscences of specially pleasing events; in other words, we forget that we have been boys. We overlook his tendencies; we do not gain his viewpoint. We have passed by his enthusiasm.

On the other hand, he does not wish to be patronized, petted, pampered. If a dad or any other man comes in touch with him, he wants to be treated like a real boy, not mollycoddled and soft-pedaled. The natural attitude of a real man to a boy should be a buoyant one—without play upon the word. There is a true philosophy in such an attitude—a frank, sensible, natural bearing toward a crowd of boys wins them. Anything else they look upon with disgust and ridicule.

How many fathers know much about the schools which their sons attend? In the case of our best secondary schools, a father looks into the record of the school, gains all he can by way of information, inquires as to its prestige, investigates the record of the principal and instructors and then

usually stops and leaves the responsibility to the school. This undoubtedly is wise to a large degree, but scores of boys do not have such privileges.

How much do fathers generally know about the public school, about teachers, about companions, about types of amusement which the boys seek? How many fathers know what kind of movies their sons attend, or where they spend their hours of recreation? How few men take time from their business to really walk, talk, work or play with their boys! And yet nothing which a man can accumulate in the way of funds, no energy which he can put into his business, no time which he can spend in building or protecting a home, is half so valuable as the time he spends with the boy.

Let fathers wake up to this responsibility. It will not only help the boy, it will keep old age from the father. He will be young again. He will gain a new lease of life.

MEN IN THE CHURCH

A POSITIVE truth is worth more than a negative. To emphasize the "don't" is to kill the "do"; at least, so we teach our children. Why, then, does

this not hold with men? We have heard a great deal of late as to "why men do not attend church." All kinds of reasons have been given, many of which, no doubt, are true; some are mere suppositions. It is not necessary to know the truth through failure when we can see illustrations in success, and study them. Without searching to know, then, "Why men do not attend church," let us ask, "Why men do attend church"; for it is a slander upon the thousands who do attend regularly and devoutly, to speak as if there were few or none who do. There are countless churches of all denominations throughout this country and abroad where the congregations always have a large proportion of men.

Sometimes in moments of personal or temporal discouragement the Christian leader unintentionally discloses the coward in calling attention to danger instead of appreciating the loyalty of the faithful. Men do attend church to-day, not as universally perhaps as we would wish them to, but that desire will never be realized by telling the unchurched men that which is not true as to the church being void of men. If we would speak more encouragingly, we would have more to encourage us. There are undoubtedly many reasons

why men are dissatisfied with church services to-day. We will not enumerate them. Enough has been said along that line.

We believe that positive doctrine has and ever will drive conviction home, and it naturally makes enemies because it tells the truth, and the opponent of that truth reveals by his opposition his smitten conscience. Men do attend church to-day where they hear the "Prophet's voice," where sin is condemned irrespective of its champions, where the preacher cares more to please God and satisfy his own conscience than he does to flatter his pew-holder and pacify a sin-tampering life. Men also attend church when they are to hear God's voice. The word of God is more alive to-day than ever before, and this very life is most unmistakably admitted in the pitiful death sounds of disappointed worldly wisdom. Men go to church, not because they want to be entertained and amused (pew rents and opera seats are not synonymous), but because they want something which will help them live aright. Men want a positive gospel, a soul-stirring conviction.

A pastor in a delightful suburb went into the business office of one of his trustees and said: "Well, sir, I'm discouraged. Can you

tell me why more of you men do not come to church?"

The trustee looked his pastor in the eye and said: "Do you want me to speak frankly?" "Yes, sir," was the reply, "I'm here because I have failed, and I want to know why."

The answer was direct, but true. "Men do not come to hear you preach because you tell them continually what you do not believe, and what you do not know and what you do not understand; and that isn't what preaching is for. In fact, men get enough of that sort of thing in their business, at the club, or in the literature of the day. What we want in church is to hear a sermon that comes from a man of belief and conviction! To hear the man talk who believes something, not one who is in doubt as to what he believes."

His friend, for such he was, went on to say that if the preacher would fight out his doubts alone on his knees, and then appear before men in the white heat of conviction, empty seats would be unknown in church, and men would not be in the minority.

We believe this simple incident is suggestive. The voice of non-belief and free thought has shouted itself hoarse, and its sound already begins to show sure signs of diseased life. The spirit of

true liberty and religious freedom is not to grant the privilege to every doubter to call audiences together to break down the faith of others, not to tell what is not believed. Every man has, however, the opportunity of speaking his convictions, of telling what he does believe. Preaching and worship do not consist in knocking men and their faith down. We question if this be even the highest work of criticism; and preaching is not criticism.

Another power which is filling the Church of Christ with men is full-souled earnestness, impassioned fervor. Such preaching is that of Knox, of which the English Ambassador wrote to Cecil: "I assure you the voice of one man is able in an hour to put more life in us than six hundred trumpets continually blustering in our ears." He never lacked men in his audiences.

Holiness of life also draws men. When Elijah spoke men listened. Men left the cities and stood in the desert to hear John the Baptist. But the people, too, have their part, and a church has influence where the men are cordial to each other, where form and formalism are subservient to a kindly word and greeting, where welcome is extended in look, hand and pew. Men attend church

today where God is, and where God lives in churchmen through the personal manliness of the indwelling Christ, who died that we might live and win others.

HEART POWER

CARLISLE wrote "When the heart is dead, the eye cannot see." If a man has not a vision he cannot act with power. If blind to the needs and desires of others, he cannot expect to be in sympathy with his fellow men. Life becomes extremely self-centred, or, in other words, selfish. Selfishness is the great sin of the world. It always has been; it always will be until men learn the personal force of the Golden Rule.

A life, then, with impaired vision, or totally void of sympathetic sight, develops greed, avarice, and does not hesitate to accomplish its own ends with crime. Man may know what he ought to know and still persist in doing that which he ought not to do if his sight is blinded from seeing others. The snail can cling to the rock and live securely, as his own shell protects him and shuts out his contact with other snails. The selfish soul is snail-like. A man may be very intellectual and still be

a snail. His life is his own. He cares not for others, because he sees not others and does not desire to see them. Mind-power may end in a cold intelligence which separates man from man in the self-preservation theory.

Jesus of Nazareth opened His eyes upon such a world. The religious teachers of His day taught "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." Pharisaism loathed interest in others. Scribes despised ignorant beings. To them Samaritans were worthless dogs, created to be cuffed and kicked and cast out. They thought sinners vile beings to be stoned and left to die. Jesus, the Son of Mary, had a heart. His head-power was not primary, but secondary. He knew what it meant to love. Human sympathy found its expression in his beautiful and divine life. His motto was not that of the snail. He did not live to protect self, but to protect and help others. His life told. A rough, reckless fisherman named Simon became a pleading Peter. An ambitious "Son of Thunder" grew into a loving John. An enthusiastic, scholarly destroyer, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter," became a peace-making Paul.

We need this same quality today—men who have a heart-vision, whose eyes see with the heart,

who love their fellow men. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Sympathy draws men. Sympathy binds men together. Sympathy is love. Sympathy is religion as Christ taught it.

Down in the human heart, crushed by the Tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore.
Touched by a loving heart, wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.

When men love one another more, life will solve many of its own problems. Is your heart cramped and cold? Don't excuse yourself because you are busy and active and cannot take time to warm it, but learn the secret of power. Give your heart a chance. Learn what religion is by loving. "Love suffereth long and is kind." Be a power in the world; a power for good, for truth, for manliness. Get out of self into others and this power will come. Sympathy will make you happy. You will have not merely popularity and influence; you will have power. Life will broaden, sight will penetrate, happiness will destroy drudgery. What is this power? It is heart-power.

WORKING WITH OTHERS

CO-OPERATION is an essential quality of efficiency. A man may be gifted, industrious, sincere, faithful, but fail because he has not learned to work with others. There are few positions in life without their difficulties and problems, and usually these exist because of people. Somebody is in the way; somebody is self-opinionated, domineering, unreasonable and disagreeable in general.

And yet that somebody makes that very problem. Without the condition which he embodies there would be no problem. The question is not how to get rid of him, but how to get on with him, and do so gracefully and successfully.

A genius may be in a class by himself, and may never or seldom need to consider the other man, but there are few such, else they would cease to be. Most men face this reality of condition and association. Nowhere is this more evident than in work for others. Such work must be organized if carried on with success. Organization means co-operation, hence work for others means working with others. Absolute or even limited monarchy no longer rules. The present situation is a democratic one; a work for the people by the people.

Authority results from a reasonable conference. The majority rules, and the minority is emphatic until it realizes its defeat, and then loyally supports the other side. All have been right. It has not been a question of principle, but of policy; method, not morality, has been under discussion. The man who works cheerfully and effectively under such circumstances is in demand.

In Christian work, especially within the church circle, he must gain this grace, whether he be pastor or parishioner. This is one of the first questions any governing board asks as to the candidate or applicant: "How does he get on with others?" "Has she an agreeable temperament?"

Our mission boards realize keenly the importance of this quality, and where it has been disregarded or overruled, results have at times been sad, if not disastrous.

It is one of the first questions asked by trustees or church committees in choosing leaders. Owing to the complexity of civic activities, it has become a vital necessity in the choice of philanthropic and social service leaders.

Within the ranks of every local church there may well be introspection. If a worker has found other workers undesirable and difficult, he may

well question if the possible cause is not nearer home.

This recognition, or the merest suggestion of it, may show the very thing itself, and an irritable conclusion may decide to desist from all work and "let others try their hand."

Such results would simplify matters and dismiss the question, but there would be no wisdom or victory in it. It would be over again the childish foppery of the pouting, untrained 4-year-old who "won't play" because his little companions won't play his way. The world laughs and then goes right on with life's game, leaving the quitter alone and quickly forgetting he ever tried to play. He soon becomes a chronic invalid of friendlessness and does not know he has the disease.

But he is not our problem. We are dealing with the man who determines he will get on with others; who sees that this is life's real and vital question,—the man who finds it hard to work with others. There are a few situations to study. Soon, instead of enemies, he makes friends. Patient, sensible, calm, himself he gains the confidence of his comrades and controls the situation almost unconsciously.

The adjustments of life may become fascinating.

Problems become puzzles, and puzzles are manufactured to afford entertainment. The happy entrance of a new day into its contests and oppositions may either call back the enthusiasm of the old athletic day on the college campus, or evoke the discouragement of the drone.

Of course we are going to work frequently with those outside our choice, but a mutual aim and genuine devotion will blend rather than separate associates.

An interesting result of unselfish service is found in its friendships. "Why, she isn't half bad," said a college girl of another who had been placed on their committee. "We heard she was a perfect shrew." "I like her immensely," said another. But that committee was made up of likable girls, and such composition is contagious.

As Christians, this is the test of our sincerity. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren" means working with them with grace and power, and the one who can "keep sweet" and keep busy is usually the man whom God honors.

POWER TO THINK

AMERICANS have been severely criticised as lacking in thinking power. We do not believe this criticism is justified, for surely a nation which has given to the world such wonderful discoveries and inventions, affording comfort and convenience, deserves no such reward; but, instead of ignoring this remark, we ought to consider its cause and profit by it. It is admitted by all that we have and always have had individual great thinkers; the criticism was made in the general sense.

This is worthy of our attention. The pertinent question is, Has the average man among us the power of mind-application aside from the suggestion materially placed before him? The tendency of today is temptingly against this very thing. This incident will illustrate: Recently, in traveling westward on one of our through sleepers, the writer became interested in the travelers about him. Here was a man with a cheap novel, endeavoring to enjoy a poor plot and worse English, and ruin his eyes at the same time. Across the aisle was a man looking through the advertisements of a current magazine. Farther up the car were two men warmly talking politics. Next them

a man of Van Bibber make-up was amusing two ladies near him by his vain attempts to keep from drowsiness. Finally he slept, and his gentle snoring still proved a temporary minstrel show for them. At the end of the car four gentlemen were playing whist.

Such was the composition of the Pullman. Now, this shows us just what we wish to note. The individuals in that car seemed powerless to spend time in profitable, quiet thought. The gentleman with the cheap novel finally became disgusted, put the book in his grip, and we fell into a conversation. He started in by saying that reading on the train was "an abominable trick." Upon my acquiescing, he said: "But, then, how else can a man kill time? He doesn't want to smoke all the time, and he can't sleep night and day."

This conversation emphasizes our point. In those words he acknowledged his lack of self-companionship. Had thought-power been his, "time-killing" would not have been his ambition. No more priceless jewel is ours than time, and still no jewel is more often "cast before swine." We not only throw time away; we verily cast it beneath the feet of worthless creations which we misname "amusements."

It is true that some people think too much and too constantly. They bore humanity by an over-serious expression and a selfish separateness, but most of us need to learn the power of enjoying and gratefully using time for personal thought. Can we imagine the author of "Pilgrim's Progress" wondering how to kill time? No; he even turned a jail into a literary den. Would Tennyson or Ruskin or Whittier have been perplexed as to what to do if left alone for a number of hours? Let the magic offspring they have left us answer. They were thinkers. They did not ignore time spent with their own minds.

The danger of educational privilege in our day is the danger of letting the picture and thought-expression of another substitute for our own mind vision. Men are not willing even to read for themselves. We want others to read for us, and then picture what they read and think so we can grasp it at a single glance.

Many a man has not the power to think out anything for himself. Many dread spending a few moments alone with their own minds unless the mind and the man sleep. Many of the sins of intemperance and stimulants are largely due to no other cause. There is little of the "Know thy-

self" doctrine about this. The greatest thinker of all history said that there would always be those who, "seeing, saw not," and "hearing, heard not;" but this same one said: "I am come that ye might have life and have it more abundantly."

The "abundant life" is a life filled with thought. The power of such a life is seen in the progress and influence of Christianity. God pity the man who has not learned to respect and value the time allotted to personal thinking! Be a friend to yourself; don't be a bore to yourself. Let your mind prove a pleasant companion to each lonely hour, and thus learn the power of thinking.

VICTORIOUS HUMOR

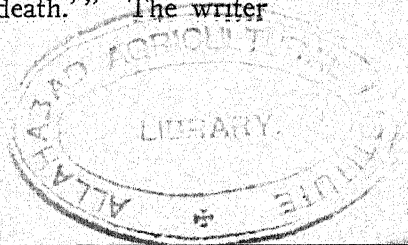
THE MIND and heart of our great nation is ever touched and thrilled by the memory of Abraham Lincoln. We may well consider among the various virtues and characteristics of his life his God-given quality of humor. Few men ever lived through such tremendous strain, and with it all have given to their age and to all time such a lasting benediction in character and achievement. The tremendous earnestness and far-sighted wis-

dom of this preëminent American were blessed by a natural and ever-present sense of humor.

Mirth for mere mirth's sake was not there, but spontaneous and relieving humor that eased the hours of extreme tension and terrible responsibility. Over that grave and strong face crept constantly the sympathetic smile which good will and merriment encouraged.

In a recent book by George A. Gordon, the revered pastor of the New Old South church, Boston, he relates an incident when the American Board of the Congregational Church was involved with extreme zeal and heated fervor in a discussion of "Probation After Death." There was a "holy rage" on the part of both sides which seemed to be ready to disintegrate the old organization. It was then that Dr. Parker of Hartford sprang into the debate with a mirthful story:

"Last evening in front of this very hall in which we are now gathered," he said, "two men were talking. One addressed the other by saying: 'These religious people have jewed us out of our fun on Sunday. They have jewed us out of our liquor, and I'm blamed if this American Board ain't talking about prohibition after death.'" The writer



states that the effect was "a thunderstorm of applause and laughter, continuing it seemed for minutes, and recurring again and again. There were a few more serious speeches but the end was evidently nigh. "The work had been done not by logic," says Dr. Gordon, "but by laughter, inspired by Him, I cannot doubt, of whom it is written, 'He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh.'"

Many instances might be given of this same tension-relief in times of great strain. Great orators have felt this, and without presuming to lower the standard of their earnestness and sincerity by cheap wit or ordinary story have let in humor like the light streaming through windows in a dark room. They have then returned to their earnestness with greater force, and with more responsive and sympathetic hearers.

This humor is by no means wise if overdone, and should seldom be used in the pulpit. Dr. Maltbie D. Babcock, of Baltimore and New York fame, used to say that one of the temptations of his life was to give too constant expression to the ever-recurring humor which tempted him in pulpit utterance; but he controlled it.

This sense of humor is so blended with the good nature of life that it frequently gains sympathy from previously uninterested folk. Great evangelists have used this power forcefully and wisely.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Moody Bible Institute called afresh before the minds of innumerable people the work of that great peer among American and world evangelists, Dwight L. Moody. The full-souled nature of the man often broke forth in this same strain of natural humor. It was never forced, but always simple and always natural. Bewildering at times to the overstrained and intolerant, it moderated their tenseness as well.

The great medical philanthropist and missionary, Wilfred Grenfell, was attracted once in London by Moody's use of it. This young, gifted man was about to leave the hall during a long prayer by a dull worshiper on the platform, when he heard Moody's ringing voice speak out clearly, "While this man is finishing his prayer we will sing hymn No. 304." This touch of adroit leadership blended with humor enticed the youthful physician to remain, and there he found his Master.

There is no good reason why a Christian should not go through life with a smile, and every reason why he should. His expressions to others may be strong, earnest, courageous, vital, but he will have a greater influence if he replaces the frown of tenseness with the look of love, the furrowed forehead with unruffled smoothness, evidence of a poise which betokens controlling good will and natural humor.

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUTER

MILLIONS of men, women and youth swarm into the business centers of our great cities each day of the working week to meet the regular duties of life. Millions of others with less regularity come and go in the various pursuits of trade, school and social activity. This travel represents a vast aggregate of hours en route, seldom utilized for any distinctive purpose. One half-hour each way is an hour a day. An hour each in 300 days is equivalent to nearly nineteen days of sixteen wide-awake hours each year.

Objectless hours are dangerous hours.

Commuting may become the developer of carelessness in thought, reading and conversation.

Advertising agencies, recognizing this fact, have made use of attractive forms of word and illustration. The daily paper is the greatest common denominator in devices for "passing the time." As one observes those who enter the morning trains of the regular commuter, he can easily estimate character if he be a student of human life.

Is it not worth while to consider how one may best plan for and use these necessary hours spent in the seat of a railway coach or street car? May we not also give regard to the opportunity thus afforded to manifest by spirit and manner the Christian life? Could it not be a time and means of interesting in spiritual matters those who are without the church?

To illustrate: One man of broad and scholarly mind has read hundreds of important volumes during the trip from home to office and returning. He selected large-typed editions, so that the eyes would not be materially injured. By habit he can take up quickly the line of thought laid down. By notes and reference he retains the results of his reading. One can be faithful to such a habit of

reading, without so confining himself to the task as to be selfish or unsociable.

A second suggestion is less specific. It applies to manner and spirit of travel.

When the aged conductor on a New England train was informed of the death of Austin Phelps, who had used his train annually in going to his summer home, the old man wept as he said: "I looked forward all the year to his trip; he was my friend and we had a good talk together on his way up. He greeted me as if I were his brother."

Friendships between trainmen and conductors are frequent and appreciated.

"There is a Christian gentleman if ever one lived," remarked a conductor as a young man stepped from the train to take the motor car waiting for him. "He lives his religion."

Gallantry and courtesy need not be confined to the drawing or dining room but should be practiced "en route" as well.

The utter indifference to others and selfish independence of many who travel regularly are in evidence. Christian friendliness and courtesy have rare privilege in the impressions they make.

The final thought has to do with using this time naturally and wisely in interesting others in spiritual interests and church responsibilities.

The future of the church will depend increasingly upon personal work. People now uninterested will not attend the church except as personal friends and acquaintances invite them and suggest its benefits.

The commuter has a great field for such promotion. Instead of becoming a bore through insistence, he need only engage frequently in helpful suggestion. It need not be intrusive. This field is not cultivated.

Commuting may be a profitable use of time instead of a waste if Christian commuters have their eyes and hearts open to the opportunity this enforced leisure provides.

CLEAR YOUR OWN SKY

OUR WEATHER bureau, with all its marvelous success, does not rid the sky of clouds or free the calendar from rainy days; nor would we have it do so. Cloud, storm, wind, rain—all have their distinctive place in the natural economy of growth and development. The material world thus illus-

trates the conditions which exist within the inner life of man. Cares, difficulties, anxieties, perplexities, sorrows, accidents, disappointments, occur constantly in the history of most individuals. But is it necessary that these shall rob life of happiness and sunshine? The most cheerful lives are generally those which so blend joy and sorrow that the shower which falls from the cloud, intermingling with the sun's rays, forms the beauty of the rainbow.

At all times, and under all conditions, we should strive to gain victory over sorrow, and over the depressing influences of grief. Are we able to let the sun shine through? Can we clear the sky? Blanchard tells us that

"Pleasures lie thickest where no pleasures seem;
There's not a leaf that falls upon the ground
But holds some joy, of silence or of sound."

Everywhere we go, all that we do, whatever we experience, may be made to contribute to our happiness.

Now, happiness is a power in this world—a temporary and also a permanent influence for good. It is an accomplishing force.

Happy men succeed where other men fail. This

characteristic, when associated with other requisites, lifts men to the top of professional and business life. A prominent railroad official once remarked of the general information clerk in one of our great union stations that he received \$2,000 more than another because of his invariably exact information, always combined with good nature.

"Why," said the official, "a tired, nervous woman, unused to travel, can ask him the same question three times, and he will answer her always with a smile."

Men succeed everywhere whose talent is backed by cheerfulness.

Clouds will move across every sky—but what of it? Clouds have their mission. They bring the picturesque into life's background; but behind the cloud there must be the sun, else no silver lining. Longfellow says, "The rays of happiness, like those of light, are colorless when unbroken." The practical outcome of this truth should help us every day. The good book says, "The joy of the Lord is your strength"; but that does not mean that we are to exercise that joy only on the Sabbath, or in the church, or when talking with those who are pious. It means that cheerfulness should enter into every activity of our lives. This happiness does

not always show itself in the witticism or joke, although these, when clean and apt, are seldom out of place. The genial nature, the cheerful personality, is always quickly recognized by man or beast. A cross man cannot make friends with a dog.

Another way to be happy is to exclude jealousy from life. Goethe says: "Who is the happiest of men? He who values the merits of others, and in their pleasure takes joy even as though 'twere his own."

Under the existing impetus of competition, and in the strife for precedence which pervades social, professional and business activities, it is not easy to appreciate this source of happiness. The thoughtful Paul said, "Rejoice with those that do rejoice." He understood this principle. When we see another home more beautiful than our own, we are likely mentally to compare notes, and then go home a little dissatisfied with our own. Why not rather rejoice the more greatly in our own because we have broadened our capacity for enjoyment through the development of appreciation?

Many have not let the sunlight through. The majority of their days are rainy days. Life has become a sort of drudgery. Associates see their faces bearing frowns more often than smiles. Even

the small boy who hopefully says, "Cheer up!" gets a provoked reply. If this is your case, why not clear the sky? It will strengthen and lengthen life. The old adage, "Be good and you'll be happy," can be reversed and still be equally strong. "Be happy and you'll be good"—and, one might add, "you'll be good for something." Happiness is the blue sky of a consistent and diligent Christian manhood. The sun is always shining; and, even if clouds dim its rays, they cannot hinder its light.

DOMESTIC SCIENCE—DOMESTIC RELIGION

DOMESTIC science, domestic economy—why not domestic religion? Horace Bushnell was fifty years ahead of his time. He said in his unequalled "Christian Nurture": "The first thought, in arming the church for great trials and stout victories, is to fill common life and the relations of the home with a Christian spirit. There is no truer truth, or more sublime. Religion never thoroughly penetrates life until it becomes domestic. Like the patriotic fire which makes a nation invincible, it never burns with inextinguishable devotion till it burns at the hearth."

Yet today religion in the home is almost universally disregarded. The percentage of homes wherein any form of family worship is maintained—even a blessing at the table—is sadly small.

By force of figures we are led to believe that regular church and Sunday school attendance is decreasing.

The day school stands for no specific, direct religious instruction—and cannot do so if church and state are to remain distinct.

Back we come, then, to face this important question: What shall we do about the home—is it not God's appointed place for religious instruction and spiritual training?

Can a nation be greater than its citizens? Can a nation be more Godlike than its homes?

If the boys and girls of today are growing up in homes without genuine and simple religious spirit and life, as well as instruction, will a Bible class years hence in school or college make up the loss?

Bushnell says, "No mock piety, no sanctimony of phrase or longitude of face on Sunday, will suffice. You must live in the light of God, and hold such a spirit in exercise as you wish to see translated into your children.

"Ah, how dismal is the contrast of a half-worldly, carnal piety; proposing money as a good thing of life; stimulating ambition for place and show; provoking ill-nature by petulance and falsehood; praying to save the rule of family worship; having now and then a religious fit, and when it is over, weeping and exhorting the family to undo all that the life has taught them to do.

"When shall we return wholly to God?" he asks, "and, looking on our children as one with us and drawing their character from us, make them arguments to duty and constancy?"

He closes a succeeding chapter by saying: "After all, there is no cheap way of making Christians of our children." It is not sufficient that we have our children baptized in infancy and sent to Sunday school in childhood while our own minds are, perhaps, occupied with things far from God. Spiritual comradeship with one's children is, alas, a thing of which many parents know nothing. In as far as we delegate this most precious of duties—the religious education of our children—to others, we fall short of God's ideal of parenthood. The Sunday school, the Endeavor, the church, were not instituted to supplant domestic religion but to strengthen it. In these days many are too prone

to manifest their religion through public institutions rather than in domestic relations. Indeed, "there is no cheap way of making Christians of our children."

No, there is not; and today if we are to give them even a religious inclination and response we must take time—take time!—and give thought to this all-important matter.

Recently a lad being graduated from one of our largest universities confessed he had no interest whatever in "so-called religious questions"—and he is the grandson of one of the country's foremost religious teachers. He himself, however, had grown up in a busy city home, where his father had been absorbed in a great commercial enterprise, his mother being controlled with equal completeness by the demands of her social circle. Their boy had grown up without religious sensibility.

He is not an exception. He represents a rapidly increasing class.

Is it fair to the boy? Is it fair to our future? Are we to solve the great problems of the nation, and the nations, without God-seeking and God-responsive sons? Are we to make the homes of such men without God-seeing and God-responsive daughters?

Can there be a genuine patriotism or a genuine religious conscience which does not begin at the fireside, and in the life of the home?

Let us therefore from now on put ahead of "domestic science" or "domestic economy" a more vital phase, nay, the most vital phase, of the home life—domestic religion.

THE BIBLE'S VALUE TO YOU

SPECIAL attention just now centers on the English Bible in view of the 300th anniversary of the King James version. That work has been the great classic of the English tongue. It has been the foundation of constitutions and laws. More than this, it has been the great textbook of character. Its pages and sentences not only inspired Shakespeare, Bunyan, Milton and Ruskin; they aroused the eloquence and stirred the souls of men so widely varied as Knox, Webster, Gladstone and Lincoln. Through the centuries its enemies have rallied its defenders and called forth testimonies rich and conclusive. The Bible is circulated more widely today than ever before; over 12,000,000 copies are sold or distributed annually. It reaches

almost 500 languages and dialects. It is open to the average man or woman today through countless textbooks and helps. Students, business men, clerks, artisans, laborers, old and young, men and women, are organized into classes to study its words and truth.

But with all this breadth of popular interest and widespread distribution, is the personal value of the Bible really known and appreciated?

It asserts clearly definite values of great personal worth, not only in the abstract but with individual testimony:

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

"By taking heed thereto a young man shall cleanse his ways."

"Through thy precepts I get understanding."

"The entrance of thy words giveth light."

"Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them."

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee."

These things are worth while. They constitute an asset in a man's life. Light, purity, common-sense, peace of mind, poise, reserve, self-control and character result.

The psalmist is not unique in these affirmations

and testimonies. From Moses to John they are repeated in Scripture, adding force to the power of the truth.

The first psalm we learned in childhood holds the secret:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

The modern man finds it difficult to meditate upon anything save the active reality of his busy life. But he is narrowing himself accordingly. Is not the "blessing" withheld because of this very fact?

A few moments spent in the morning with the Bible in thoughtful reading will give poise and direction to the whole day. Once this was the place and meaning of family prayers, now little more than a forgotten tradition in many homes.

The Bible will unconsciously give clear style and forceful diction to those who master it. Ruskin's readers attribute much in his clear style to his intimacy with the Bible. Lincoln learned his style and his simple, strong diction there. Without a

knowledge of the Bible no man can be well educated.

But to you, the individual, the greatest personal worth of God's Word is in its heart-searching power. "It is quick and powerful." It divides, it discerns, it knows the purposes, the intents of the heart. It shows a man himself and saves him from himself. It mirrors his life to his own eyes. It matures the thought, "Thou God seest me." It photographs the real self. There is a need of this God-given accurate introspection, for it tends to the reformation of character; and the Bible reforms by regenerating. Its words are life and liberty and love. Its creed is sincere and simple, for it defines life unselfishly and turns love and liberty into service and democracy. Let us study it, you and I, hard pressed as we are by life's demands, to show ourselves indeed approved unto God, workmen who need not be ashamed, rightly knowing and divining the word of truth.

INTERRUPTION

INTERRUPTION is said to be the enemy of regularity, the foe of accomplishment, the destroyer of system. "He cannot be interrupted; he is ex-

tremely busy," was the reply of the office boy to the unknown caller who requested an interview with the financier.

"But my work is not an interruption," was the rejoinder. "I have an important transaction to present to him."

"Then you will have to communicate with him and make an appointment," replied the clerk, trained to his position.

Success in business means discrimination, the careful watching of time, enforced exclusion of secondary considerations and efforts. The rejected seeker often feels slighted, injured, hurt; but the sensible man sees at once the situation and, accepting it, acts accordingly. Proper introduction changes an interruption into an opportunity. The busiest men are most approachable when practical and important issues are at stake. It is far easier to see the man high up than many of his numerous assistants—if the errand be important and properly introduced. Interruptions are blessings in disguise; they are unexpected opportunities. To disregard them universally would handicap advance and discourage enterprise.

Interruptions also enhance the value of system,

calling attention to its necessity and placing an appreciation on its worth. Chaos has no special interruption, for it is all interruption. The man in whose office there is neither system nor regularity is never really interrupted, for interruption constitutes the actual condition. Use of the word "interruption" presupposes order, decorum, regularity and faithfulness.

History is largely the record of interruption. Nations have been forced out of the commonplace and ordinary by special deeds and forces—a disaster, an insult, a violated confidence, perhaps like a flash in a clear sky. Lightning itself is an interruption, with its flash and quick thundering response. That flash reveals unknown conditions in the darkness. It frequently clears the air as well. An interruption is a rending of the regular. It is a new pathway which divides by separating. It enters into life's compact. It cuts, it severs, it disperses; but it is the separation of the old by the entrance of the new.

It is not always dramatic or aggressive. It is sometimes quiet, firm, resistless. Defensive Wellington interrupted Bonaparte just as definitely as aggressive Cromwell interrupted the reign of the

Stuarts. Interruption may mean quiet, resistless opposition, or it may mean quick, unexpected activity.

Man's unexpected is God's expected. Human interruption may mean divine construction. God frequently arrests advance that he may correct error. He frequently interrupts human aggression that he may regulate divine purpose. A Damascus highway with its blinding light interrupted his angry enemy, but that enemy was the divine choice of leadership in the early church. An interrupted Saul received the divine challenge and with it the inspiration of holy purpose. Jesus Christ constantly interrupted men in their accustomed work. He did this when he chose his apostles. His invitation to follow him was seldom accompanied with explanation.

By interruption lives are usually called into higher service. A word, a letter, an invitation, a command, and the whole viewpoint of life changes.

Why look upon interruption critically? Of course it is hard to adjust life, to quickly overcome the unexpected obstacle, to accomplish the full day's work when called so frequently from the task. But interruptions measure opportunities. God is

within them and behind them, and stands in front of them as well. We know not what a day may bring forth. The man who shields his life from all interruption may be blocking divine progress in his life. A cheerful response, a willing spirit, a wise judgment and a prayerful dependence will regulate life's interruptions and direct them with the accurate and sure aim of divine marksmanship.

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct thy paths."

THE DANGER OF OVERSERVICE

MANY YEARS ago Dr. Courtney H. Fenn, one of our faithful and devoted missionaries in Peking, China, wrote a beautiful poem entitled, "The Friend Supreme." This poem has been sung to the music of the "Angel's Story," a beautiful hymn written by Arthur H. Mann. One of the verses of the newly adapted hymn reads:

"I need a friend who knows me
So justly through and through
He'll ne'er misjudge a motive,
Nor let me strain to do
More work than I can manage,
The work that is not mine,
Because of vain ambition,
Or conscience drawn too fine."

This hymn in a way suggests the truth of our thought. We need a friend in Christ who will restrain us from doing *more* work than we can manage; "the work that is not mine, because of vain ambition or conscience drawn too fine." And, still, every man who is set to a definite task and who has ambition as well as purpose and conscience in his work realizes how difficult it is to discriminate between essentials and non-essentials in duties; between tasks which should and must be performed, and those which one desires and delights to do.

But the tension is too great, and, sooner or later, will evidence itself in worn-out bodies, tired brains, countless irritabilities, and, worse than all else, nerves which are no longer controlled, and cause general and debilitating results.

Many have suggested methods to remedy this condition and still the necessity of such remedy is seldom recognized until actual distress so controls that it is not a question of remedy.

The life we are living today is a veritable whirlwind of activity, and wise is the man who can set

aside time to poise his own life and control his own spirit so that he will be free from the dangers which follow *overservice*.

Nothing looks normal when the mind is worn, and there is only one real remedy to suggest; that is, absolute quiet and separation from the immediate tasks. Frequently this is not possible and frequently the body and mind seem incapable of yielding to sleep and genuine rest.

Many conditions today seem to oppose the negation of invitations to additional service and work. One is supposed to be disinterested, careless, selfish or in many instances unsympathetic; nevertheless, such action must be taken if far-reaching and helpful results are to be gained.

The value of regular tasks well performed; the necessity of doing one's work instead of assisting another at his job; insistence upon training rather than entertaining one's own people; these are the evidences of real character and are the forerunners of a long and successful work, crowned by the blessing of God.

The age is a restless one, but health is not restless, but rested, and normal conditions alone create normal health and permanent vigor. The man who realizes that future ability depends upon the use of present energy and the conservation of strength for life's most worthwhile tasks is the man who never grows old.

WATERING FLOWERS

IT WAS a quiet evening in Switzerland. The sun was setting and the whole western sky was lit up with the rapidly changing shades of the even-tide glow. The lake below reflected floating cloud and distant shore, for the air was still and the water calm. The little terraced garden beneath the veranda where I was sitting gave out fragrance and was enriched by almost every shade of color, from the bright reds of the geraniums to the delicate tints of the forget-me-nots and the white lace-like border of the sweet alyssum. Evening birds were occasionally trilling their vesper song. Workmen with weary steps plodded homeward along the narrow roadway, one bearing a wide scythe and another carrying a rough bundle of wood, gathered for the coming days of cold.

At the click of the gate I turned to see the tired face of a woman as she left the road and entered the garden. She carried an old watering-pot, and walked over to the pump to fill it. Slowly and lightly she went from bed to bed, and from plant to plant, up and down the tiny garden, refreshing all from the supply of living water.

As I watched her I caught strains of an old melody that she was humming; the face seemed to lose its care and wrinkles. Calmness and a happy smile stole over her features. The day's work was done and she had now turned to her beloved flower garden. Here and there she stopped to pull a weed or to straighten an overburdened bough, ever happy and ever humming in peaceful forgetfulness of all the day's toil and worry.

As I watched her I recalled what I had heard of her life, filled with hardship, labor and repeated sorrow. Parents gone; the old home far away taken from them; an invalid sister; a brother lost in the war (in which he had volunteered); her own body weakened by illness, long hours and overwork. But all was forgotten now, and with watering-pot, garden and song she was as happy

as the children over the way who were jumping rope and circling in "ring-around-a-rosy."

What a blessing that garden had become! What refreshment there was in the old green painted watering-pot!

This old world needs the garden and the watering-pot, if worried, worn-out, tired lives are to find their joy and comfort ere they lie down to rest. The distant mountains seemed warmer and more cheerful, notwithstanding their perpetual snows; the forests which line the lake were less deep and foreboding; the lake itself was alluring and dreamy; the stars came out like rare gems in a diadem of honor and glory. The cascade falling from the cliff behind us seemed to ripple and laugh as it joined in the merry symphony. Far out from a mountain pasture came the clear note of a shepherd's flute, and from the distant shore of the lake the liquid sound of a boatman's mandolin and the yodle of a Swiss lover.

The magic key which had unlocked all this harmony of peace and good will was in the life spirit of the tired woman who had ceased from her day's toil and was watering her little garden close at hand. She had unwittingly changed an ordinary

night scene into a fairyland of enchantment, loveliness and song.

Simple, homely, unknown joys lie all about us, and the toilers in life's field may pause at evening, if they will, and hear the curfew bell of peace and quietness, and of unworried joy.

It was no doubt at the close of a long and weary day, when the road was hard and rough, that those saints of old said: "Did not our hearts burn within us as He talked with us in the way?"

"Earthly cares can never vex me,
Neither trials lay me low,
For when Satan comes to vex me
To the secret place I go."

THE LESSON OF A BRAVE LIFE

DURING THE first part of January some years ago another tragedy was added to those of mountain climbing in America. Agnes Wolcott Vaille, the secretary of the Denver Chamber of Commerce, and an ardent and brave mountaineer, was conquered by the storms of Long's peak, and on her descent from the east face summit was frozen to death. Few individuals, men or women,

have held a higher place in the esteem of their fellow-beings than did Miss Vaille. The attempt to scale those heights in the winter time may not have been well advised, but her own determination and courage quailed before no opposition.

One of the Denver papers in commenting says: "Miss Vaille was a fine and constructive influence in community life. She was a splendid example of the woman in business and an illustration of the uplifting qualities which women of education and refinement can bring to the affairs of men."

It also adds: "She had the courage and strength of a man and the soul of a naturalist." Another writer comments: "In her scheme of life an obstacle was something to be overcome, not an unconquerable barrier to be avoided."

Many illustrations might be given to direct attention to the noble character and fearless spirit of this brave woman. We would use the sad and telling incident to point out and magnify certain qualities needed in this work-a-day world of ours.

Strong souls are needed today to battle with vast and insurmountable forces. Where difficulties are stupendous, it takes courage not to yield.

All about us are those timid souls who see only absurdity in resistance. The weakling yields even before the suggestion of opposition is heard. But strong souls must always be found to conquer.

It is the strong souls who have made the world's advances in all ages; moral heroes who willingly faced danger, never yielding to defeat: men and women who have given themselves and who have left behind them monuments of human greatness to stand throughout the ages.

Recently I stood by the grave of William Whiting Borden in the little cemetery of old Cairo, Egypt. At hand were the graves of unknown heroes who had died in the great war.

William Whiting Borden gave his life in even a greater war, for he gave himself and his all as he followed the vision and person of his Master.

On his tombstone are the words, "Aside from Jesus Christ there is no explanation for such a life."

It is well for men and women, old and young, to consider the object and purpose of living. Life is not valuable simply to spend and enjoy for self,

but it is priceless if given in and for noble and unselfish causes.

He who wins is he who gives himself. Energy, courage and spirit are not enough; with them there must be a purpose high and worthy.

The lesson of heroism which we have here cited should thrill every reader with determination to act well his part, and so to live that he shall fear not death, but cowardice and weakness.

This is Godlike, for the Saviour of men came to live and die that we might live, and the triumph of the riven tomb could come only after the victory of sacrifice on Calvary's cross.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

MUD TURTLES IN PARIS

WHAT AN ABSURD notion! Mud turtles in the city of art and music, of beauty and song! Nevertheless, the very fact that they exist there, and in the location we found them, makes me think even more of Paris. It was a Sunday afternoon in June, and we called upon our friend, the pastor

of the American church, to renew old friendship and enjoy a cup of tea in his lovely home.

The children very quickly joined in the hospitality of the welcome and made us privileged characters and took us out to see their "pets." In a little improvised wooden inclosure on the narrow stone window-veranda we found them. The little wooden yard, scarce two feet square, had within it a place of shade, soft grass, a miniature pond and some genuine mud. Here Mr. and Mrs. Mud Turtle were basking in the sun. As they were lifted for inspection, the stubby little fellows pulled their short legs and pudgy little heads within their shells, just as they used to when we caught them in our boyhood days in far-away New England. Our little friends enjoyed them and petted them as if they were puppies or kittens or bunny rabbits.

From this pleasant apartment and those high windows we looked off upon the Seine and Eiffel tower and many of the fair city's renowned buildings, but the children and the mud turtles have lingered in memory longer than anything else.

Why should not the children cooped up in city apartments, crowded into the narrow limits of city conditions, have their pets and the joy of living

things to love and cherish? There is something in the very nature of a boy that exults and expands if he can make a confidant of a dog. "Chumship" with nature means larger-heartedness. Living things to love beget a loving of all things that live. An invalid's home is filled with joy by the sweet notes of a canary; a dingy shop-surrounded window becomes a garden spot with a few pots of geraniums or a window-box of pansies. Life needs the expansion of loving life if lives are to grow more lovely. Children even in Paris may cherish mud turtles.

I can see the joy of those little faces still, all brightness and fun and naturalness, as that boy and girl carefully replaced those awkward, short-legged, shell-backed quadrupeds in their well-protected little veranda ranch. They were living things to love and feed and protect.

Inanimate toys have their place, but living things go farther in developing the best in a child's nature. That pet white mouse which got out of your pocket in the primary school almost fifty years ago may have caused a temporary panic and resulted in your immediate disgrace, but your love for the little creature was worth far more than the cruel

instinct of the neighboring boy who delighted in pulling off flies' wings or wounding robins with his slingshot.

The language of laughter and crying in children is a universal language the world over. The same is true of animal voices: dogs bark, roosters crow, birds sing, the world over, in a universal tongue. Flowers bloom, roses send out the same fragrance, winds blow and streams ripple in the same harmony and loveliness all round the big world. There is a universal language for nature everywhere.

Let children have their pets, no matter what conditions may be, for to rob them of this natural instinct will dwarf and stunt the joy and blessing of one of the sweetest gifts God has given.

The story is told of a small boy who was crying, uncomforted, because his dog had been run over. At last his father, wearied by the lad's grief and crying, spoke harshly:

"Your grandfather, my own father, died a month ago, but I don't go around crying all the time and grieving for him, do I?"

"I know," sobbed the boy in reply, "but, Dad, you hadn't brought him up from the time he was a pup."

The boy's sorrow was genuine, even if he failed to see the humor. He had lost his living, loving chum.

Children love animals. Let us give them a chance, and the kindness of human nature, together with the gentler instincts of love and thoughtfulness, will develop men and women to meet more bravely life's problems and be better able to assuage life's sorrows with joy, hope and loving sympathy.

CHEERFULNESS ON THE JOB

THE LAKE was blue and beautiful, but the air was sultry, and effort of any kind seemed irksome. As we passed the old boatman at the wharf there was something in his happy, contented face that attracted us. His boat seemed all the more inviting because of the man who owned it. His words were in Italian. But good nature has a common tongue, and his cheerful face and winning smile were as effective as comprehensible language. Combined they drew us to his boat as willing passengers.

Soon we were seated on the comfortable cushions, and with the canopy drawn to shelter us from the glaring sun were gliding smoothly over the placid water. Every stroke of his oars seemed to be in harmony with all nature round about, and to be part of his strong skilled self. He was as silent as the Sphinx, but as capable as he was silent. Yet he was not grim; his whole personality radiated good cheer and contentment. He was always the same; ever anxious to find out just what was wanted and then all eagerness to gratify the wish.

During our sojourn we always asked for that boatman. He was not easy to get, for every one else who knew him wanted him too.

We learned later of his little home far up on the mountainside. It was a walk of twenty minutes or more from the lake shore, but nevertheless he was always at his task early and late, ready and eager to pull his sturdy oar. Something of the native Italian sunshine seemed to have got into his nature as well as into his swarthy, weather-beaten face.

Once we crossed the lake in a sudden storm. The waves ran high. The wind and choppy surface were foreboding and fearful, but they caused no wrinkle in his calm, steady face. Instead we

were cheered by a smile of confidence and almost paternal sympathy. With his word, "Tranquillo, tranquillo," in his own tongue, he gestured us to be at ease. If we were a trifle restless, with a slight motion of his body he would trim the boat and quietly row on. That was all that was needed to restore confidence and peace. He knew all was well and told it with his trusty arm and in his tensionless face. In a few moments he had brought us safely to the landing as though we had been in a dead calm.

The old boatman of Cadenabbia had unconsciously learned the secret of a happy, useful life. His face and manner incarnated friendliness, assurance and contentment. He was actually "as happy as the day is long." His own task was all he wanted, and he did it notably well. Every one trusted him; his mates were fond of him. He always had plenty to do when the weather was pleasant, and when it was rainy he hummed an Italian air as he stood in his yellow oilskins, or plodded up the mountain to his little house on the heights. He was apparently at peace with God and man, and in love with his little boat and his job.

As evening comes on I can picture the old boatman far up on the pasture-clad hillsides, playing with his sturdy lads, or chaffing with them as he cares for the garden or bears away the new-made hay on his broad back. The song is still on his lips as in the quiet evening the wavelets lap on the shore far below.

This humble workman has learned the joy of accepting his simple task as a blessing, and daily transforms the ordinary and commonplace into the best gifts of God. No poet sings his praises, but he has made what others would consider monotony a recreation, and has given application to "Blessed be drudgery." After meeting this old boatman of the far-famed old Italian lake life seems a trifle bigger and more worth while. The insignificant tasks of the day have about them more of the true meaning of those words about the giving of "a cup of cold water."

KILLING YOUR SNAKES

AMONG THOSE who are working successfully and with far-reaching influence in the Near East relief work in Palestine is a classmate of mine

at Amherst College, Edward W. Blatchford. He is very much beloved by the hundreds of orphan boys in the various orphanages there.

The story is related by him that in one of these the little lads have repeatedly asked him for his picture to hang among the American celebrities whose faces adorn their walls.

With natural reluctance Mr. Blatchford disregarded their request until its insistence became embarrassing. He finally told them he would acquiesce. The day of the presentation came and when the picture was unveiled the boys were surprised and disappointed to see a fine copy of Laocoön and his sons struggling with the serpent.

But Mr. Blatchford was too quick for them and silenced their complaint by saying, "Boys, that is my picture and it is true to my life ever since I was your age. I have had struggles with the serpent ever since I was a boy, and I expect to continue that fight as long as I live." He told them that serpent meant theft, falsity, immorality, deceit, hatred, selfishness and all the sins and evils of life.

A day or two later, as one of the little lads was

about to show his defiance of and bitterness toward another boy, a third shouted out to him, "Why don't you kill your snake?"

The lesson is one for all of us. The struggle will never cease. The famous old statue is a photograph of every home and every life. The subtle sins are the most dangerous and ever entwine themselves about us. Many a strong life has been overpowered and defeated by pride and jealousy, by anger or deceit, though shielded from open and gross wrong. The contest is a never-ending one, and the struggle universal.

Those lads of Palestine will never forget this faithful lesson so dramatically presented by their friend, and they will ever strive, no doubt, to "kill their snake."

The distinction between good and evil must not be obliterated in this day of lessening definition. Conscience must be guarded and contest against wrong encouraged. Those who cry that it makes little difference what one does so long as his intentions are good are not only the foes of character but the disintegrators of society. The chief contest of life is in the conquest of the soul, and youth

must learn this lesson young, or maturity and age will be blighted and destroyed.

The nature of the serpent is to hide and approach slyly, to thrust and poison from under cover, if possible. His strength is not in his blow but in his unrelenting and encircling embrace. Life is not immediately broken but crushed by gradual and sure death. At last the struggle ends because there is no fight in the victim. Strength and resistance have been crushed out.

It is well to repeat the warning of that little Syrian lad, "Why don't you kill your snake?"

POISONED ARROWS

THE TREACHEROUS cruelty and malign intent of the warring savage led him to dip his arrowhead in the deadly venom of the serpent, that with the wound might mingle and spread the fatal poison. The far more penetrating and dastardly wickedness of poison gas found its way into warfare in the late unprecedented inhumanity of the world war. The civilized world and Christian nations have been universally bewildered by such

acts, and the public mind and heart of Christendom have rebelled, and, we trust, called a halt.

But there is a likeness between such acts of cruelty and death and the poisoned arrows of the tongue and pen. To slay the body by ruthless poison is no worse than to attempt to kill character by words spoken or written that poison society. The laws of the state protect the individual from the shafts of fatal slander and demand evidence and just punishment in cases of open and personal attack, but even so it is well nigh impossible to arrest or overtake a slanderous lie.

Even more subtle and pervasive is the inferential and nebulous suggestion of evil! Its very fog and mystery create suspicion and distrust. Men of honor and character have ever despised and condemned such method.

The Christian has never resorted to its course without disclosing a spirit which has soiled and shattered the name of Christ.

The masterful report of the General Assembly's Special Commission recently delivered calls to our vital attention this very truth and shows how

careful Christians must be to observe a spirit of brotherly love. It states under the "Fifth Cause for Unrest" in the church: "There is a further group of causes of unrest to be considered. We refer to the misunderstandings and misinformation of which we have learned, but far more to the misjudgments and unfair and untrue statements which have been made in speech and in printed publications. Whether or not these be actionable under the laws against slander and libel, they are in clear violation of the injunction of the Church. No one can realize how grave and extensive the moral and possibly the legal offense in this matter has been unless he goes over, as we have had to do under the instructions of the Assembly, the statements which have been made. If we are to have peace and purity in the Church, all slander and misrepresentation must be brought to an end. The Spirit of Christ must be allowed to bring forth His fruits among us and all evil speaking must be put away, to the end that 'speaking truth in love, we may grow up in all things into Him, who is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the in-

crease of the body unto the building up of itself in love.' ”

All Christians, whether of our own creed or others, may well consider this solemn admonition. Assertion of personal or creedal loyalty should never slander another unless charges are preferred and courts of justice demanded.

The weakness of one's faith and insincerity of one's spirit are evidenced by such unholy methods. “If a brother be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one” is the Christian rule. We should reread again Edna Lyall's little English classic, “The Autobiography of a Slander.” “Poisoned arrows” are not the warfare of a Peter, a Paul, or a John, but are found only in the quiver of a Judas.

“This is my command, that ye love one another.”

RELIEVING THE TENSION

THE QUESTION of vacation is a very prominent one that presents itself each year. It applies not only to those who can set aside a few weeks for a definite vacation, but also to those who take

advantage of the daylight-saving arrangement of time, and take added hours in the open from day to day during the summer months. If possible, however, one should do more than this latter, for every hard-working man and woman owes to himself as well as to his family a certain change and cessation from the regular duties of life.

Pastors have sometimes been heard to say: "I have not taken a vacation for ten years," but such men usually have an unwilling vacation forced upon them in the break-down of health, either physical or mental, and oftentimes spiritual as well.

God set the law of a vacation when he put aside one day in seven for rest and worship. "Man was not made for the Sabbath but the Sabbath was made for man." It is the recreative time. The wise interpretation of the Lord's Day has in it the thought of recreation, not merely as amusement and idle play, but a recreation of the entire system—a rest which includes the spiritual. It should be the vacation period of the soul.

Many a pastor who never takes a vacation himself, and feels he does not need it, does not realize that probably his people do, and that the church will be benefited if they hear another voice for a

few weeks and come in touch with other personalities.

The locomotives on our transcontinental railroads do not run for thousands of miles in continuous action, but are changed at the great railroad centers and junctions every few hundred miles. Fresh engines and machinery as well as engineers are substituted. Nothing must be overstrained, and this is true as well of human life.

Man needs a time to pause, to expand, to see horizons, as he enriches his soul by some far-reaching view; to breathe more deeply of the ozone of mountain, plain and sea; to come in contact with nature in the deep woods; to gain the music and happy laughter of running streams; to appreciate the silences of the open and the distances of the great stars out in the night where nature is unrestricted by artificial light with its black shadows. He needs to get away from the dazzle of white lights and the city's confusion, and feel the presence of God, free from the accentuation of human voices. He needs to wake in the morning with the song of the birds; to look into the skies and see the clouds gather and fade as changing atmospheres meet; to walk and ride and climb and

play that youth may be renewed, and that he may recover normal strength and vital energy.

Vacation time should be a time of meditation and quiet thought and reading where one can infill the mind and soul and think less of the outflow of the world's need and sympathy.

The whole problem seems impossible to some people, especially from the standpoint of the use of time and the expenditure of money. But one should stop and think whether it is worth while and whether one can afford *not* to take a vacation rather than whether one can afford to take one. Firms and organizations, small and large, are realizing that having an employed force without making proper arrangements for vacations is superficial and short-lived economy. Any one can do better work forty-eight or fifty weeks out of fifty-two if he has four or two weeks rest and let-up, than he can do under fifty-two weeks of consecutive activity.

The philosophy of common sense must be used by employer as well as employe, both generally and personally in this important question, which, if solved aright, will prove a satisfactory adjustment to many of the difficult problems of employer

and employee. Even the Saviour found it necessary to go into the woods, to walk by the sea and to go up into the mountains.

STARTING AND KEEPING ON

PROBABLY ten days do not go by in a new year without a repetition of the old excuses of years gone by. Before one knows it he will be saying: "What's the use?" "Right back on the same old track," "New year resolutions all gone by the board," "No use trying," "Can't kill a habit," "Temperaments too controlling," "May as well give up." This is just where the test of real character comes in. It is not the man who gets the best start who always wins the race, especially if it is the long-distance run. It may mean a great deal on the short run or sprint, but it is not of relative importance when one has many laps to make and the race is one of permanent courage and stability.

Robert Louis Stevenson realized this when he wrote:

"Oh, for faith and strength to win,
Every battle we begin;
Oh, for patience to put through
Every task one planned to do."

There is a stimulation and wholesome enthusiasm in attempting to begin the new year aright and anew, no matter how many times we have tried in the past and have failed.

Most men do not become sufficiently stereotyped in life, material and purpose to be invulnerable to the thrill of a new start. January 1 means more than a new calendar to almost every one with purpose and character. But these natural and impetuous desires do not stay with us. This is the trouble! We soon find ourselves precisely where we aimed not to be. We reach the "falling down" stage ere we know it. We are getting back into the same old rut. We are headed in the same direction. There has been a curve in the path and we find ourselves facing the way we were headed in December, although we have started out in another direction.

Shall a man really give up and accept the direction of least resistance in a fatalistic sort of way, basing his action on the weak excuse that life is not a matter of creed and purpose, but of inclination and irresistible indulgence?

The weakling may say yes, but that is not the reply of the man of strength. Roosevelt said, echoing an old adage, "It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed." We may well add that success implies not only determination but fidelity to purpose and eternal vigilance.

Fidelity and vigilance are not easy to attain and maintain. The real test of the runner comes when his first wind has given out and he must gain his second wind. How many men drop out of the race at just that time, talking of the weariness of their limbs and the weakness of their hearts, or excusing themselves on the ground that others have stopped running!

James Russell Lowell said, "Folks that are afraid to fail are sure of failure." If you find you have stopped, start up again, and start in the same direction, with greater determination than ever. It is not only possible to overtake those in front of you but to attain their pace and keep on.

Bunyan's Pilgrim would never have reached the eternal city if he had not kept his eye and thought on the Wicker Gate. Others tried to dissuade him from his course; physical impediments and ob-

stacles retarded his journey constantly; even wild beasts prowled and enemies threatened. But there ahead was the Wicker Gate and the vision was always brightened by some unexpected encouragement, as long as he persisted on his journey.

Every successful man has learned that success may grow out of failure, seen in its right perspective, just as failure accepted at a wrong valuation tends to discourage one from taking the right road to success. We must even remember that "men may rise on stepping stones of their dead selves" to higher things.

Tomorrow is always a hopeful day for the sanguine of temperament, but its practical possibilities lie in one being able to insure tomorrow's success by today's immediate and persistent effort. Discouraged people always lag behind; forlorn hopes always sing a dirge; fever and ague beset the dead and stagnant swamp.

The stream that flows from the life-giving fountain, which bubbles up from the hidden spring, is swift and turbulent, but its way is onward, and it rushes round the boulder it cannot dislodge. Its

current is not stopped by obstacles, but changed to furrow a new course as it plunges forward.

Robert Browning touches an inspiring note in his sentence: "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp or what's heaven for?"

The new year's advent day soon passes; its days thicken into weeks; soon a second month dawns, but the year will still be new. Its opportunities for us may yet be triumphant; its restirred energies multiplied; its first enthusiasm regained; but to make sure of this, persistent, daily, momentary effort, with unshakable adherence to primary resolve and determination, must accentuate each day and each task.

THE BLESSING OF ILLNESS

WHEN A strong man or woman is laid flat on his back for a week with the flu or some other unexpected malady, his first usual experience is that of utter disregard of all things living and human. If his temperature is high and he is unconsciously struggling with a disease, his physical as well as mental condition is probably such that he is not in a state to moralize, neither is he de-

sirous of any religious attention. The physical has let go. Heated blood, a tired body and a quick pulse have robbed him of any sense of desire to think, strive, or even pray.

The things he needs above all else are a good physician, a careful nurse, rest, sleep and quietness. Later when his temperature goes down, when he begins to realize how much it means to have loved ones and friends about him and a comfortable bed in which to lie; when he realizes there are those who really care, his mind becomes more responsive, and his heart grows sympathetic and kindly. Then it is he begins to think, and although the days which follow may be days of weakness and limited strength, the average man is likely to do a good deal of real thinking and to meditate upon matters which were of comparatively little concern to him during his illness.

There is a blessing in such experiences, which may come unsought and undesired, but which nonetheless have God's hand in them; and there is a chance to consider and meditate entirely aside from the usual method of the mind and heart.

After all what a blessing health is! How little

we regard it until we have injured it or have been robbed of its atmosphere and spirit! How much home and friendship really mean! How wonderful it is to be able to control and guard and nurture these bodies of ours that they may be able to respond with the splendid obedience of health and vigor!

How much more closely we feel in touch with those who are weakened in body or strength, and who have to fight constantly the problems of weakness and ill-health!

How much more sympathetic the heart becomes toward those who are never strong, but whose wills and minds work out the problems of their own difficulties with cheerfulness and fidelity!

How much more easily we realize the place which human sympathy and kindness have in human relationships! How readily we sense the sorrow of persons, who desire to be a help and blessing to those who suffer when it seems impossible to give real assistance, and they realize that they cannot do for those whom they love as they might wish!

What a valuable asset to society a physician

becomes! How remarkable a nurse! How true friendship shows itself! How thoughtfulness in little things becomes a benediction.

The Great Physician means more as with unspoken word but ever-nigh presence He gives rest to body and peace to mind. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." "I will never leave you nor forsake you." "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

HONESTY AND PROMPTNESS

FIVE MEN had waited fifteen minutes for a sixth who was to fill the remaining seat in an auto en route to see the Sox play the Cubs in their annual baseball tryout. "Not another minute, boys," said the driver of the car. "If he wants to miss the first inning, I don't. I doubt if we'll see the first ball cross the plate as it is." They all piled in and the conversation turned on the absent and tardy Harry.

"Confound him, he's always late, no matter what it is. I wonder if he knows it's chronic with him and has been since college days? He's such a cork-

ing good fellow, everybody seems willing to put up with it; but between you and me, boys, it's the one thing that has kept him from a big success. He has more gifts than any of us, but look at him—always behind in cash as well as behind time, and he's on the same job at about the same pay he had ten years ago, and all those kids besides!"

"Say, Bill, there he is now, beating it for all he's worth after the car! Slow down a second." The car stopped amid promiscuous tooting behind, and a fine athletic man of 35 jumped in, out of breath.

He had a plausible excuse and good fellowship reigned as a little more speed made up for lost time. Of course the personal remarks ceased and jollyng took their place.

Harry's excuse had been a delayed telephone message and the congestion of traffic. Old, worn-out and oft-abused reasons! Threadbare, in fact, but still usable.

Harry himself seemed as unconcerned as if nothing had happened and the conversation turned on the merits of the competing teams. But the incident gives us our illustration.

Tardiness is dishonest, if things are called by their right names. Time is more valuable than bonds and less easily purchased, especially in times of need and emergency. The man or woman who is always late is usually slovenly about life in general and has little or no respect for the rights and privileges of other men and women.

A tardy being is also a very selfish being, usually, mindful only of his own convenience and pleasure. This is not always so, but holds nevertheless. It was not so with Harry. He was an unselfish, lovable soul, but thoughtless and careless. He had kept those five men waiting at the club door for fifteen minutes. In other words, he had made the appointment with them and he had taken one hour and a quarter of time that was not his, and for which he could not and did not intend to pay.

Their leniency does not excuse him. He had been dishonest; not intentionally, but actually just the same.

What he had easily excused and forgotten would have cost an office boy his job, or wrecked a train under certain circumstances.

Dishonesty is not rendered honesty because a

man is a good fellow or because what he takes isn't missed. The habit becomes easily chronic as it was in Harry's case. Carelessness as to time is self-deception, and ere one realizes his failing he is known as a clock delinquent.

When the habit is acquired late in life or after a man has attained prominence, although recognized, it is passed over. "Nevertheless" answers for the sin against society, and that "nevertheless" makes him an excused character because he has other gifts and position.

"The little sins of great men, however, make the great sins of little men," and tardiness is a sin no matter what its magnitude or the character of the sinner.

The employer who is always tardy has an undisciplined store or office and in time is likely to have no one in his employ.

The railroad which is known to run its trains always late soon goes bankrupt or changes hands.

The minister who frequently begins his services five minutes late usually preaches at least that much too long, and is liable to stay too long in his field. Such a man is usually in debt and careless in his attire and behind in his calling. He is the kind

who grows old prematurely and shows his age in action before he realizes it.

He is likely to have a poorly managed family and a discouraged wife; children who are late to day school and Sunday school, and poor in their studies at that. His boy will never know the thrill of a victory on track and will not even make the scrub team in major athletics. All because instead of two, he has three hands, as Mark Twain used to say: A right hand, a left hand and a little behind-hand.

Practical religion begins with old Sol and the clock. "Be on time" is a good motto.

THE VALUE OF A MAN

IN THE *American Magazine* Irving Bacheller, whose writings are always suggestive and interesting to many of us, had an article on the subject, "My Greatest Possessions." He introduced the matter by the illustration that in an eastern tribe every one picks up even a scrap of paper, treating it reverently because the name of Allah

might be on it, and then drew the lesson that this should be our attitude toward men and women. He gave also the illustration of the discovery of Lafcadio Hearn, who became so famous as a master in literature. This discovery was due to a simple kindness given to a discouraged youth who asked for employment.

The article set us to thinking along the line of the worth-while value of human life. No matter where we may live or how we may be surrounded, there are those whose lives seem to us unfortunate and worthless, and whom we are likely to pass by idly or carelessly relegate to the scrap-heap of human failures.

Is it not worth while to realize the regenerating influence and the inspiring power of kindly attention and wise assistance? None of us desires to increase the valuelessness of a ne'er-do-well by continued charity, nor are we willing to relieve our sense of responsibility for our fellow men by handing out an occasional nickel or dime to the professional who in mumbling tone solicits us upon the street. But this whole question goes deeper than either of these extremes.

Recently a lad came to my door, just as I was leaving on an important errand requiring quick action. He solicited my help. His manner was leisurely, his attitude somewhat cringing and embarrassed, and he had all the earmarks of a professional "panhandler." His story itself appeared somewhat trite and forced.

I spoke to him hastily, questioning the story he told. The young man turned quickly in anger and said, "Well, if you don't believe me I don't want your help anyway. I'd rather starve to death than not be believed."

I went my way and he went his, but my conscience troubled me and going around the block in a circuitous way I sought and found him. He still had his troubled and angered face.

I said, "My boy, there is no need of your getting angry about it, anyway." Calling me by name, he replied: "No, I am quick-tempered, sir, but the one thing on which I have always prided myself is telling the truth. I came to you after about a half hour's fight with myself and my pride and I apparently should not have come, but what I told you was the truth."

I walked a half a block with him to a neighboring restaurant and gave him money for a meal and

a night's lodging. He thanked me courteously and entered the restaurant. I have not seen him since and in all probability I never shall, but my own conscience was clearer and my own heart happier as I went to the immediate task of that evening. I know my message was of greater value.

The reflex influence of believing in men is worth while. It should apply just as much to organized and well-regulated charity as to the individual response. But it must have a love for man and a belief in man back of it. To lose these is far worse than losing money.

The fellow-humanity of the individual should always have its appeal to us, and the harder his ill-luck story the more conscious it should make us of what we ourselves might have been under different circumstances. Truly, but for the grace of God we might be where tens of thousands are today. One soul regained, one life encouraged, one fellow man lifted out of careless and despondent life, is worth more to this old world and to its human value than the endowment of a room to care for the sick.

We may so easily send rays of sunshine into darkened lives if our very beings and personalities generate light. Waves of sound may by the radio carry exquisite melodies and rare harmonies to the minds and hearts of the disturbed and those who are ill at ease, quieting and inspiring, with happy and oftentimes holy impulses. The face, the voice, the word, the thought, the gift may even more easily reach the heart of man and renew and re-inspire manly hopes, purposes and desires.

Let us not lose our belief in human nature and our love for mankind. May we never become so wearied with the tasks of life that we fail to embody the Christ who lived above the tasks and transformed his daily services into rare opportunities to help others.

The widow of Nain was a stranger to Him, no doubt, but He called the lad to life. The woman of Samaria was an outcast, Zaccheus was a curiosity seeker whom He made a penitent philanthropist. Peter, the swearing fisherman, became the rock of apostolic leadership.